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## The *Una Sancta* in Luther's Theology\*

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Luther's concept of the *Una Sancta* was first and last soteriological; not sociological, not statistical, not organizational, not eschatological. Luther's emphasis on soteriology in his definition of the Church can be understood only in the light of his theological principle. Scholastic theology had not satisfied him. Its Aristotelian method had failed to bring assurance of peace to his heart, and its autosoteric principles had been unable to quiet his conscience. The Apostle's message: "The sinner is justified by faith alone," changed Luther's theology both as to method and to content. His theology became entirely Christocentric; in the Preface to his *Commentary on Galatians* he says: "Only one article rules in my heart, namely, faith in Christ. From this article all my theological thoughts by day and night proceed, and to this one article they again return." Luther's greatness as a theologian consisted in this, that he never veered from the material principle of his theology, justification by faith in Christ's vicarious work. For him the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation concerned themselves with only one great truth, man's redemption through Jesus Christ. The entire Scriptures were for him only the manger bed where Christ, the world's Savior, is cradled, and in his opinion he was the best theologian who was able to find Christ everywhere in the Scriptures. Christ's vicarious atonement appropriated by the sinner through faith is the *leitmotif* of his theological symphony.

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Luther could therefore never treat theology as a series of independent and isolated dogmatic statements, each fitting nicely into a specific compartment. He never discussed a theological point *in vacuo*. His theology is truly a *corpus doctrinae*, in which each doctrine stands in intimate relation to every other doctrine and all doctrines retain their proper relation to the material principle of his theology, the sinner's salvation through faith in Christ's vicarious work. Wilhelm Walther says that one will find in Luther's theology only large quarry stones, and that he who seeks in his writings cut stones and architectural embellishments will be sorely disappointed. Luther is too great for such piecemeal theology.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore impossible to understand his concept of the *Una Sancta* independent of his central doctrine.

## I

"A child of seven years knows what the Holy Christian Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd"; this is Luther's definition of the *Una Sancta*.<sup>2</sup> According to his belief the *Una Sancta* is never anything but the congregation of believers, or saints. It is always the sum total of all who through Word and Sacrament have come to faith in Christ as their Savior. The principle of the Reformation: Faith embraces the grace of God in Christ promised and given to man in the Gospel — this determines Luther's definition of the *Una Sancta*, and conversely his definition of the Church is in reality a compend and epitome of his entire theology.

## II

Luther had little interest in an empirical Church as such — be it visible Christendom, a national Church, a denomination, or a federation of churches. In his opinion there was only one Church in the Scriptural and proper meaning, the *Una Sancta*. As far as is known, he never distinguishes between a visible and an invisible Church as we are wont to do. Because the various meanings of the word "church" have caused confusion in the Church<sup>3</sup> Luther avoided the term "*Kirche*" in his New Testament translation lest his readers would associate the new Testament *ecclesia* with a visible organization. Not once did he translate *ecclesia* with "*Kirche*," but always with "*Gemeinde*," assembly, congregation. In the Large Catechism

he says that "the word *Kirche* is really nothing but a common assembly, and is not a German but a Greek idiom, *kyria*. Therefore in genuine German it ought to be called a Christian congregation or assembly (*Gemeinde*), or best of all a holy Christendom." According to Luther there is only one true Church, the invisible *Una Sancta*, and the empirical Church, "the church in an improper sense," may be called a church only by synecdoche; that is, it is a Church only because of the true believers to whom the hypocrites and unbelievers are joined in outward association. The unbelievers who outwardly belong to an ecclesiastical organization were considered by Luther members of the Church as little as the mud on the wheels belongs to the essence of a wagon. To mingle believers and unbelievers in the *Una Sancta* was for Luther a mingling of Law and Gospel. According to his theology the believers and unbelievers are in two separate realms: the godly under the Gospel with its promises of God's grace, the unbelievers under the Law with its demands, threats, and punishment. The unbelievers can be dealt with only through coercive measures, moral persuasion, or social pressure, or even physical force. The Church, however, is the invisible company of all who live under the Gospel of God's grace, freed from the demands, threats, and coercion of the Law. The idea of a theocracy, in which the physical and the spiritual, the Law and the Gospel, a visible society and the invisible *Una Sancta* are mingled, is foreign to Luther's theology. In accord with Luther's theological principle, faith in Christ is the only criterion of membership in the true Church, and faith is in its very nature invisible, for it embraces spiritual and heavenly blessings, forgiveness of sin, conquest over death, peace with God. Therefore the Church is invisible even as the Rock, Christ, on which it is built is believed and not seen. In his treatise against Emser of Leipzig, Luther says that when we confess, "I believe the Holy Christian Church," we declare that the Church is invisible. What we believe we cannot see and perceive with the senses. Since faith in Christ alone makes us members of the Church, and since faith is invisible, therefore the Church in its proper sense must be invisible.

It has been said that Luther's *Una Sancta* is no more than a metaphysical abstraction, a Platonic idea, a noumenal concept, or just a nice theological term, having no practical value;

and that an effective program for church activity can be realized only in the visible Church. But Luther could not share the view that in visible Christendom, with its denominational divisions, the seamless robe of the *Una Sancta* has been shredded into so many rags and tatters that it is beyond recovery, that the majestic term *Una Sancta* denotes a mere abstraction and vague hypothesis, and that there is apparently nothing in our church-life experience to correspond to the ideal of the *Una Sancta*.<sup>4</sup> Even in America, Luther would maintain that his *Una Sancta* was a reality and not an idea which is required to be supplemented by a Platonic phenomenon whereby the idea of the *Una Sancta* would become perceptible, such as a congregation, presbytery, synod, consistory. The *Una Sancta* was not a vague hypothesis for Luther. He was convinced that while invisible, the *Una Sancta* had unmistakable marks of its reality. He held that wherever the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments are administered, the Holy Spirit is building the *Una Sancta* by engendering faith in the hearts of men through the means of grace.<sup>5</sup>

### III

In controversies the pendulum easily swings from one extreme to another. Luther's early conflict with Rome revolved very largely about Rome's claim that the visible Church is the highest religious authority. Between 1517 and 1521 this conflict brought into sharp relief the antipodal positions of Rome on the one extreme and of Luther on the other. Here a visible *Una Sancta Ecclesia, extra quam salus non est*; there the invisible congregation of believers and saints. Here the visible hierarchy; there the spiritual priesthood of believers. Is Luther's conflict with an external and hierarchical church responsible for his swinging toward a diametrically opposite view? Is Grisar perhaps right in his claim that Luther's view of the church grew in part out of resentment against the official Church which had refused to sanction his new doctrine and in part out of a desire to justify his defection from the Church? The fact is that Luther's spiritual concept of the *Una Sancta* was a *fait accompli* long before the indulgence controversy of 1517. Karl Holl has shown from Luther's *Commentary on the Psalms* (1513—1515) that as early as 1513 the material principle of Luther's theology, justification by faith — *sola fide* — was quite clearly fixed in his mind. As soon as *sola fide* — the



just shall live by faith — had become a living reality for Luther, his approach to theology as a whole and to the various doctrines in particular changed completely. He now viewed ecclesiology from the standpoint of *sola fide* and could not conceive of the Church otherwise than a congregation of believers, *communio fidelium*.<sup>6</sup> We shall therefore be compelled to reverse Grisar's verdict to read: Luther's controversy with Rome grew out of his new concept of the Church.

According to Luther, *sola fide* is unthinkable without *sola gratia*. Faith and grace were for him always correlative terms. After 1513 Luther no longer viewed *gratia* as a virtue in man, but as God's unmerited favor toward the undeserving sinner, in short, as a promise. But a promise can be received *sola fide*. Therefore both *gratia* and *fides* exclude all human merit and extol the gracious activity of God as the only source of man's salvation. Luther had tried the various human ways to God, but in vain. Neither asceticism nor mysticism led his searching soul to God. But Luther's search ended when he experienced the God-toward-man activity. God's gracious action, so Luther held since 1513, had without any merit or co-operation on his part redeemed, called, converted, justified, and sanctified him, had translated him from the realm of sin into the company of saints. And this gracious activity Luther found expressed in the New Testament Reign of God (*basileia tou theou*). This explains the fact that *basileia* and *ecclesia* are like the convex and the concave in this theological circle. When Luther thought of the *Una Sancta*, his attention was focused first on God's gracious activity, and he placed the *basileia* into the forefront of his ecclesiology. For according to Luther *basileia* is a verbal noun denoting a royal activity rather than a royal realm.<sup>7</sup> His opponents defined the *basileia* as a visible kingdom comprising both good and evil.<sup>8</sup> Luther, however, maintained over and over, e. g., in a Christmas sermon on Isaiah 7, that *basileia* is not a visible realm, is not constituted of men at all, but denotes God's gracious rulership, the Savior's redemptive work, and the Spirit's reign in the hearts of men. Luther's *basileia* is vertical rather than horizontal, a God-toward-man activity. This is the dominant thought of his entire theology as is brought out in the explanation of the Second Article of the Creed in his Small Catechism.

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, in order that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.<sup>9</sup>

In a sermon for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, Luther says that in His death upon the cross Christ established the charter of God's kingdom, a most glorious charter, because it guarantees man a threefold freedom—freedom from the guilt of sin, from the terror of death, and the power of Satan. This threefold liberty was a living reality for Luther. In his experience sin and the resultant wrath of God were more than theological phrases. He did not view sin as a tension between man's better and worse self, but as human rebellion against God; yes, as an attempted deicide. Sin, in his view, was not a wrong against the sinner himself, nor against his fellow man, but always and finally against God. Therefore the greatness of sin, says Luther, can be measured by one yardstick only, namely, the infinitude of God's holy majesty. The wrath of God over sin was for him a stark reality.<sup>10</sup> Therefore freedom from the accusing conscience and the assurance of God's grace and favor were for him in truth the world's greatest charter. And God's *basileia* is in Luther's opinion that gracious activity which makes this charter a living and vital reality in the hearts of the believers. It was his endeavor to inculcate this concept of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of young and old. Hence the following question and answer in his Large Catechism:

What is the Kingdom of God? Nothing else than what we learned in the Creed, that God sent His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the power of the devil, and to bring us to Himself, and to govern us as a King of righteousness, life, and salvation against sin, death, and an evil conscience, for which end He has also bestowed His Holy Ghost, who is to bring these things home to us by His Holy Word, and to illumine and strengthen us in the faith by His power.

Luther's theology is throughout soteriological, and therefore also his ecclesiology has its starting point, center, and final end in God's gracious activity, in short, it is the theology of

*basileia tou theou*. According to his view, the Kingdom of God is not eschatological, for the gracious activity of God bestows upon all members of the *Una Sancta* the heavenly treasures even here and now. Nor is the Kingdom sociological, a Ritschlian "moral union of men," for it is the bestowal of such blessings as establish a right relation between man and God. Christ has become his King so that he "might live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness." That is the compend of Luther's theology and his ecclesiology. And there is the dynamics of his theology.

#### IV

According to Luther, *basileia* and *ecclesia* are correlative terms, since both focus our attention upon spiritual gifts: the former, however, upon God as the Giver, and the latter upon the believers as the recipients. The *Una Sancta Ecclesia* is therefore the group which has been made holy through God's gracious activity. In Luther's opinion the phrase *communio sanctorum* is merely a paraphrase of *Una Sancta*, and he would protest strenuously against placing a semicolon between the phrases "a Holy Christian Church" and "the communion of saints," as though the ancient Church had two distinct ideas in mind. In support of his position he held, in the first place, that *sanctorum* is not neuter, but masculine gender,<sup>11</sup> and in the second place, that *communio* is not an abstract noun, denoting sharing, but a concrete noun and is best translated assembly, congregation. In the Large Catechism he states: "To speak correctly, we ought to say in the Third Article: 'I believe that the Holy Christian Church is a congregation made up purely of saints'; again, 'I believe there is upon earth a little group and congregation of pure saints under one Head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Ghost in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in love, without sects or schisms. I am also a part and member of the same, a sharer and joint owner of all the goods it possesses, brought to it and incorporated in it by the Holy Ghost by having heard and continuing to hear the Word of God.'" <sup>12</sup>

But could Luther really believe that the *Una Sancta* is a congregation of pure saints? Was this probably an ideal for which men should strive? Could a modern preacher as he

surveys his own personal life and the lives of his parishioners actually confess with them the Creed according to Luther's interpretation: "I believe a holy Christendom, a congregation of pure saints"? Luther could unequivocally make this confession because the material principle of his theology, justification by faith, was not a metaphysical abstraction, but a living reality. He believed that sinners are adjudged righteous before God because of Christ's righteousness and are therefore saints, all human experience to the contrary notwithstanding. Luther's concept of the congregation of saints is only another revelation of the heart of his theology. He believed that he was totally devoid of anything that would make him holy, yes, that he deserved only God's displeasure. But he believed with all his heart that Christ having assumed his nature, not only paid the full penalty of his sin and guilt, but also rendered perfect obedience to the divine Law. Whenever Luther feared the just punishment for his sin, he would seek refuge in the passive obedience of Christ, and say: "We are freely justified for Christ's sake through faith when we believe that we are received into favor and that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death has made satisfaction for our sins."<sup>13</sup> And whenever Luther's conscience convicted him that he had failed to procure the spotless holiness which God requires, he would — to use his language — deck himself in the foreign plumage of Christ's active obedience. In a sermon on the Gospel for St. Thomas Day he says:

What are the strange works which avail before God? They are the works of our Lord Jesus Christ whom God has sent from heaven to propitiate through His suffering and death. He also has fulfilled the Law in our stead by loving God with His whole heart and us as Himself. Therefore, if the Law condemns you, then point to Jesus and say: "There is the Man who has fulfilled it for me and gives me His perfect obedience to the Law as my own." This will silence the accusations of the Law. Thus we are justified through a foreign righteousness.

Luther's definition of the *Una Sancta* as the congregation of pure saints is only the logical application of his central theological principle. Believing that faith always appropriates the entire Christ, Luther held that the sum total of believers constitutes a congregation of perfect saints. In his commentary on Psalm 45:11 he says:

As a beautiful queen is clothed in costly gowns, so the Church is decked in Christ's righteousness from head to foot. Therefore God cannot see any wrinkle in her, because He sees nothing but His Son with whom she is clothed and who has given her the garment of holiness, life, and glory. If there is still sin in the Church, only the devil sees it, and only we feel it in our conscience, but God does not see it, for as Christ is without spot or blemish, so is the Church perfect in God's sight for Christ's sake, without spot or blemish.

The paradox *peccator et simul justus* is solved in the light of faith which accepts Christ's entire righteousness, for as Luther says in his comment on Galatians 5:19, God has hidden the Church under the wickedness, sins, failings, and errors of men lest we mistakenly seek the *Una Sancta* in a visible and empirical body of man-made saints. God, however, sees the faith and therefore in his sight the *Una Sancta* is truly nothing but a congregation of pure saints.

Two charges are preferred against Luther's theology: the one, that *sola fide* leads to a life of sin, and the other, that *sola gratia* leads to quietism. The charge is allegedly sustained by the observation that Luther's adherents have consistently failed to make a vital contribution to society as a whole, and have deliberately by-passed all social problems. Luther would probably offer in rebuttal the following two arguments: (1) When he speaks of the holiness of the Church, he stresses not only Christ's righteousness, *aliena justitia*, but also the Christian's own incipient holiness, *justitia propria*. While he constantly preaches that we are justified by faith alone, he stresses as earnestly that faith is never alone, or as he put it epigrammatically: *Sola fides justificat, sed fides non est sola*. In his Preface to Romans he says:

Oh, it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing that we have in faith, so that it is impossible for it not to do good without ceasing. Nor does it ask whether good works are to be done; but before the question is asked, it has wrought them and is always engaged in doing them.

All the victories which the Christians win over their sins and all the good works which Christians perform are the trophies of their Redeemer and King. (2) The Holy Christian Church through the consecrated life of its members permeates every social institution. A study of Luther's *Exposition of the Decalog* clearly reveals that in his view every social institu-



tion, the home, the state, labor, management, is affected by the *Una Sancta*. What no organized visible Church can accomplish, that is effected by the holiness of the *Una Sancta*, which as a leaven permeates the entire social structure.<sup>14</sup>

## V

Luther's concept of the *Una Sancta* left no room for an institutionalized, organizational, and statistically empirical church. His Church in its proper Scriptural sense was truly ecumenical, without racial, cultural, social, or even denominational lines of demarcation. He saw the *Una Sancta* as the body of Christ, united in one faith, one Baptism, one hope, without any schisms or sects. Even in the treatise against Hans Worst, his sharpest treatise against Rome's claim that it represents the only true Church, Luther maintains the true ecumenicity of the *Una Sancta*. He refused to pit an organized Church, for example, a Lutheran, an Evangelical, a Protestant Church, against the visible organization of the Roman Church. The Roman apologists claimed that Luther was outside of the Church because he had refused to submit to the decrees of the Church Councils. But Luther countered that the true Church was above Popes and Councils and included all those who through faith are united with Christ. His bitter denunciations of the Roman Catholics' claim that they alone constituted the true Church are a matter of historic record. But it must also be borne in mind that Luther stated again and again that the *Una Sancta* includes all those within the visible Roman Catholic Church who through faith accept Christ as their Savior. His ecumenical view of the Church prompted him to assert that wherever Baptism is administered and the Gospel is proclaimed, there in spite of human additions and corruptions the *Una Sancta* is truly present.

## VI

But how could Luther be so truly ecumenical in theory and at the same time so highly separatistic in practice? In the *Una Sancta* he wishes to embrace all who believe, but in the visible union of Christians he refuses the hand of fellowship to such as are not in full doctrinal agreement with him. Is he paying lip service only to ecumenicity when in his letter to Count Lueneburg he stated that next to Christ he desired



nothing more than true unity between the Reformed and the Lutherans, and would gladly endure a bitter death to accomplish such unity? The solution of the problem lies in Luther's attitude toward the Word of God. To him the Word was both the inviolable source of all doctrine and the only means of grace.

Luther had sought Christian assurance in the traditions of the Church, in scholastic philosophy, and in German mysticism, but in vain. In his threefold Reformation principle, *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Fide*, however, he found it. For to him the Scriptures were the complete and reliable revelation of God's gracious will to man, which man must accept in full faith. The absolute reliability of the Word in its promises of God's grace was therefore indispensable for his doctrine of justification by faith. The Word of God as contained in the canonical books of both Testaments was for Luther the only source and foundation for faith. And conversely he held that only they who unconditionally accepted God's promises in the Scriptures were believers and members of the *Una Sancta*.

The modern slogan "Deeds not creeds" was foreign to Luther's thinking. True, he esteemed Christian virtues very highly and did his utmost to inculcate them. In his controversy with the Antinomians, who had spoken disparagingly of good works, Luther stated that he would not sell one *Pater Noster* spoken in faith for all the riches of the world. Nevertheless he held that **doctrine must come first, for to him the Bible was God's revelation of His grace in Christ.** Only the person who through faith in Christ's redemptive work has first been justified can perform God-pleasing works. This is what Luther meant when he said that God is not so much concerned about our deeds as about our creed. Filial submission to every word of God's revelation was the life stream in Luther's theology. He has been charged with lovelessness in dealing with those who differed with him in doctrinal matters. Luther's answer runs something like this: "We must differentiate sharply between the nature of love and faith. It is love's nature to bear and to forgive. Love can do so even at the risk of being deceived, because it will not thereby lose Christ." Luther did possess a large measure of love and was truly tolerant. But, he said, faith's nature is to endure nothing, to

yield to no one, for if we yield in matters of our salvation, we lose Christ. His comments on Galatians 5:9, "Cursed is the love whereby the doctrine of our faith is endangered," may seem harsh to modern ears, but they were in accord with his principle of *Sola Scriptura*. It was not contentiousness but loyalty to his principle which prompted his action toward Zwingli at Marburg in 1529 concerning the Real Presence. In his opinion doctrine is like an unbroken and unbreakable golden ring or like a strand of pearls strung on the golden thread of Christ's vicarious work as the God-man. According to Luther's view Zwingli attacked not only the *Sola Scriptura* principle when he employed the rationalistic principle *Finitum non est capax infiniti*, but also the *gratia sola* and the *fide sola*. Luther argued that if Christ is incapable of being present in the Lord's Supper according to His human nature, then the union of the two natures in Christ, the so-called personal union, was likewise untenable. Then by inevitable logic not the God-man died for man, but only a human nature, and the death of Christ as a mere man was according to Luther insufficient to deliver man from sin, death, and hell. Not only the *Sola Scriptura* principle, for which he contended against Rome, was at stake, but also the other two great Reformation principles, principles which were for him the very foundation of the Church.

A consistent and determined effort to sabotage *Sola Scriptura* was in Luther's opinion tantamount to breaking the golden ring of Biblical theology. Toward such as erred in doctrine from ignorance and without undermining the foundation, Luther was extremely tolerant. But his attitude toward those whose teachings destroyed any one of the three Reformation principles was adamant.

In his controversy with Rome Luther stressed the sufficiency and inerrancy of the Scriptures. In the clash with the "heavenly prophets," particularly with the Anabaptists, he emphasized that God deals with man only through His Word. He was firmly convinced that there is no immediate and direct way from God to man, but that God deals with man only through means, the means of grace. To understand Luther on this point it is necessary to keep in mind that he believed that by nature man is totally depraved, spiritually dead, and an enemy of God and therefore totally unable to have any

"spiritual movements." If man is to be converted, God must by His omnipotent grace kindle and nourish the spiritual life. But God performs this only through the Word. He held that as God's almighty *Fiat* created the world out of nothing and still sustains it, so also the Word of God in the Bible and the Sacraments is the power of God to change the hearts of men.

He believed that through the Law the Holy Ghost works the terrors of conscience and through the gracious invitation of the Gospel the Holy Ghost engenders faith. And this effective and efficacious Word of God, this transforming voice of the omnipotent and gracious God, Luther heard only in the revealed Word, whether it was read in the Bible, proclaimed in the sermon, pronounced in the words of absolution, or connected with the elements of the Sacraments. His *Sola Scriptura* principle did not permit him to divorce the Spirit's operation from the Word, as though the Spirit worked immediately and even irresistibly. And his *sola fide* principle prevented him from attaching magical views to the Sacraments, as though by the mere act performed (*ex opere operato*) they conferred the grace of God. Luther's view on the means of grace is summarized in the Augsburg Confession as follows: "That we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments as through instruments the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith."<sup>15</sup>

Luther believed that the Word was God's creative voice, even though only portions of this Word were read or proclaimed, and for this reason he was certain that the *Una Sancta* was present if no more than the Gospel and Epistle lections were read and Baptism administered. Luther viewed the Word not quantitatively, but qualitatively, and for him the question was not how much of the Bible a Christian knew and accepted, but rather, how well a Christian believed in Christ on the basis of whatever quantum he knew. On the other hand, he held that purity of doctrine was necessary for outward unity and union. In his view truth and error cannot be granted equal rights in the Church, for only truth builds the Church, while error, being merely a human word, has no creative power, in fact, may actually impede the activity of God's truth. When hearing both, God's truth and man's error, the hearer may be tempted to accept the latter and thus

frustrate the life-creating activity of the Word of God. This is what Luther had in mind when he said that "in the congregation of saints the Word is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered." His implicit trust in the Word of God as the only means to engender and preserve faith prompted his uncompromising stand toward error. His concept of the *Una Sancta* as the company of all those who through the Word are united by faith with Christ and with one another demanded unswerving loyalty to the *Sola Scriptura* principle.

The ecumenical movement hopes to rise above and eventually to remove denominational and ideological differences and to present a united visible Church. But as Dr. Visser 't Hooft pointed out in a recent issue of *Christendom*, the Ecumenical Movement must be the expression of an already existing inner unity. The Lutheran concept of the *Una Sancta* is the dynamic for such inner unity, since it furnishes the means whereby men are incorporated into the body of Christ: the Word of God engendering faith to accept the grace of God in Christ Jesus. In the face of Roman institutionalism, enthusiastic immediacy of the Spirit, and pure activism Luther's concept of the Church stressed *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, and *Sola Fide*. In the light of these three principles Luther understood the Savior's sacerdotal prayer for the unity of the Church: "I pray for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one."

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## Memorandum Concerning the Church Situation in Germany

By MARTIN KIUNKE

Since the collapse of 1945 the church situation in Germany is horribly confused, for the political chaos seriously affected the church conditions. But even before the political collapse a number of trends developed in the Protestant churches which brought havoc to the churches. This disorder was accentuated by the political collapse to such a degree that conditions never were so confused in German church history as at present.

Two years have passed since the political collapse; years of honest searching, tireless activity, and extreme suffering. What has been accomplished? The confusion has not been dissolved; on the contrary, the points of emphasis are beginning to stand in bold relief. The alembic is functioning. New concepts are in the process of formation. Naturally, these are intimately related to the old church forms, but at the same time they bear the stamp of the new day. One senses that the history of Christ's Church is progressing as though it were equipped with seven-league boots. Whither? To new heights? Hardly. For apparently the Church must go through new dark valleys which, though differing somewhat from the former depths, are no less dangerous. The Church is confronted with dangers such as the Church since the Reformation has not experienced.

No matter what will happen to the Church in Germany, the fate of the German Church cannot be restricted to Ger-

many or even to Europe. The globe has become too constricted for that. This is true particularly of the Lutheran Church as the Church of the pure Gospel. The decisions made in German Lutheranism today will sooner or later spread for good or for evil, like radioactivity, in all directions. No Lutheran Church in the world will remain untouched by what will happen in the Lutheran Church of Germany.

There are particularly three groups which are emerging from the present chaos: (1) The Evangelical Church in Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland — EKID), (2) The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (Vereinigte Evangel.-Luth. Kirche Deutschlands — VELKD), (3) The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church.

## I

### THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN GERMANY (EKID)

The EKID is in the main the continuation of the Confessing Church (Bekennende Kirche — BK). The BK came into existence as a resistance movement against the nationalistic socialistic State. The labors, the struggles, and the sacrifices of the BK brought forth their fruit after the collapse of Hitlerism. The loosely organized BK took on more and more the form of a Church. After the collapse of 1945 the underground movements of the BK asserted themselves and assumed the leadership in the reorganization of the German Evangelical Church. The leaders in the BK took a decided stand against the politically sponsored church organization of 1933, the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirche* (DEK). Bishop Dr. Wurm of the Wuerttemberg State Church (nominally Lutheran), a leading spokesman of the BK, gave expression to this thought at the first gathering of churchmen after the collapse, when he said at Treysa in 1945: "It is self-evident that we cannot think of the restoration of an ecclesiastical organism which showed itself so helpless in 1933 against the attacks of a clever and powerful enemy." But it soon became apparent that one cannot rid himself so quickly of the results of the past. As early as March, 1946, the official organ of the EKID published the brief but significant statement: "The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) is the continuation of the German Evangelical Church (DEK) of 1933." Though the picture of the EKID is still somewhat hazy, one can nevertheless discern,



among other things, a national-church concept. The fact that the German empire is destroyed makes this observation all the more significant. Some entertain the hope that a Pan-German Evangelical Church will serve as a substitute for the departed political unity. "In our nation, which is divided into occupational zones, yes, which is actually split into an eastern and a western section, only the Church can serve as a spiritual bond of the unity of all German-speaking members of our people." Yes, one even hears expressions such as these: The Prussia which has ceased to exist must continue in the Church of the old Prussian Union, though in a new form. Such ideas must lead to confusion and stymie all attempts to build the Church as a Church.

We ask: What does the EKiD actually wish to be? The "tentative order," adopted at Treysa in 1945, gives the answer: "In its attack upon the errors of our day and in its struggles against a State Church totalitarianism the EKiD has been led to an inner unity (*kirchlich gegruendete innere Einheit*) which goes beyond that of the German Evangelical Church Federation<sup>1</sup> of 1922. This unity was first expressed at the confessional synods of Barmen, Dahlen, and Augsburg."

It is evident that the EKiD hopes to be more than a church federation for co-operation in externals, such as eleemosynary and other social activities. If, as the resolution of 1945 indicates, a real inner spiritual unity exists in the EKiD, then there must follow co-operation in *internis*, more specifically, co-operation in the most important phase of church work: a joint confession of the Gospel before the world. And that is exactly what was done in the various confessional synods since 1934, when Lutherans, Evangelicals, and Reformed churches in the "unity of the spirit" gave joint confessions.<sup>2</sup> To cap the

<sup>1</sup> Der Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenbund of 1850 was re-organized in 1922 as the organ of national German Protestantism. The Deutsche Evangelische Kirche (DEK) came into being in 1933, when the various provincial churches yielded to the widespread clamor for unification of all forces of German life. The constitution proposed to create a United German Evangelical Church, capable of supporting the Nazis in their efforts "to undertake the political and moral purification of public life" by setting up a *Reichsbischof*, in accordance with the leadership principle, a Spiritual Council, and a National Synod. When it shortly became evident that the DEK was Nazi-controlled, an organized opposition came into being, known as the "*Bekennende Kirche*" (BK).

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<sup>2</sup> It is, of course, possible that church bodies not in doctrinal fellowship may under certain conditions issue a joint statement con-

climax, the 1945 Treysa resolution states expressly that the unity of the EKID transcends the unity of the church federation of 1922—1933. Here we have it in unmistakable terms that the unity of the EKID transcends that of the former Evangelischer Kirchenbund.

It is difficult to square, on the one hand, the claim that the EKID is only a federation of confessionally independent churches and, on the other, the recent developments and especially the proclamation of Treysa. We regret particularly that the Lutheran provincial churches have taken an impossible position. On the one hand, they declare that in their opinion the EKID is only a federation and that they insist upon its remaining such. But, on the other hand, they fail to profess that the Treysa resolution concerning the inner unity is untenable and therefore not binding. But in the constitution of the recently organized United Evang. Luth. Church (VELKD) we read: "The VELKD cultivates (pflegt) the fellowship with the Evangelical Reformed and the Evangelical United churches of Germany which it has gained in its struggle for the confession and which has been confirmed in the proclamation of Treysa and therefore joins the others in the common tasks" (Article V, Section 8). Thereby the Lutheran provincial churches have officially sanctioned the Treysa resolution, with its claim that there is an inner fellowship of all three denominations. Nevertheless the by-laws of the VELKD's constitution define the EKID merely as a federation, not as a Church. It is apparent that the use of the term "federation" (*Kirchenbund*) is misleading.

It is of great significance for the future of the Lutheran churches that they accepted the Treysa declaration. This is quite evident as one studies the plans for the further development of the Evangelical Church in Germany. We read: "He . . . recognizes in this hour God's call for a union of the Evangelical churches in Germany as the Evangelical Church in Germany on the basis of a truly Biblical unity and with the goal of true church fellowship. . . . The tentative order

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cerning some anti-Christian movement without becoming guilty of unionism. We feel that the mistake of the Barmen Theses was not that the various German confessional groups united in a joint declaration against the neopaganism of Hitlerism, but that the leaders of the EKID believe that this joint confession is sufficient for a union of all churches, and that all doctrinal divergences were studiously ignored.

Ed. NOTE

of the EKID, according to Treysa, is a fruit of the twelve-year church struggle of the BK, especially the fruit of the three confessional synods of Barmen, Dahlem, and Augsburg. . . . We know that it is difficult to solve the confessional problem of the EKID. But we believe today, as twelve years ago, that there is such a strong unifying power in obedience to the Lord of the Church that we shall be able, in spite of the differences of our respective Reformation Confessions, to achieve a unity of spirit and action. We believe that on the basis of Scripture and the Reformation Confessions the EKID will find a true confessional foundation. This will be effected when the Lutheran and the Reformed and the Evangelical Churches each seriously considers its confessional foundation. They will thus receive a new understanding of the truth of the Lord Jesus (as it is present) in His congregation according to His promise: "The creation of a true congregation and its presentation in the confessing word!" . . . We believe that the joint Communion services of Lutherans, Reformed, and Evangelicals are not contrary to the Scriptural administration of the Lord's Supper. . . . The problem of paramount importance is not the confessional status. It is an either-or: for or against Christ. Because we deeply feel our obligation to the confession of the fathers, we are not interested to act as representatives of the Lutheran Church in Germany, but of the Evangelical Church in Germany." This, in brief, is the plan of a number of EKID leaders. The deep-seated unionism in Germany and the close tie-up with the ecumenical movement will abet this plan. We have our serious doubts whether the Lutheran provincial churches are capable of stemming the tide begun at Treysa. After the catastrophe of 1945 the Lutheran Church should have observed the rule: *principiis obsta*. This they failed to do, and now they find it impossible to free themselves from the chains which they themselves forged.

All the Lutheran *Landeskirchen* of Germany are involved in the EKID. For this reason it is imperative that we examine a number of essential characteristics of the EKID.

First of all, we want to call attention to a very gratifying phenomenon. The EKID was organized without any encouragement or support from political powers. The same is true of the VELKD. Whether the EKID will remain free from all political influences, remains to be seen. Nevertheless, it is a

noteworthy fact that for the first time in the long history of the Protestant churches of Germany a Church comprising all Germany was organized without political influence. The *Corpus Evangelicorum*, the federation of Lutherans and Reformed after the 'Thirty Years' War, was organized by church powers. The Prussian Union Church of 1830 would never have come into existence without the power of the State. We all vividly remember how powerfully the pressure of the nationalistic State stood behind the organization of the DEK in 1933. We are happy therefore that a complete change took place when in 1945 churchmen organized the EKID as a Church of the Christians and for the Christians. It would be unjust and unhistorical if one ignored this praiseworthy progress.

But history repeats itself. Wherever the Lord permits the Church to take a step forward at one place, there the Tempter breaks in at another place and leads her backward. On the credit side we must report the independent and free action of the Church in the formation of the EKID, but on the debit side we must register a saddening indifference toward the divine truth committed to the Church. True, the gross errors of the German Christians are unanimously and vigorously rejected. But there is an almost unbelievable indifference toward the numerous fine and yet very dangerous errors which come in Christian garb; for example, under the guise of "true Biblical unity." Not only the tentative constitution, but particularly the further plans of the EKID show that the EKID is unionistic. In fact, the adoption of a unionistic confession is advocated. In the light of the whole historical development the EKID is in reality a unionistic Church on a much larger scale than the former Prussian Union, a union which will comprise all of Germany, will enjoy legal status, and will become a permanent institution comprising practically all Protestant church bodies, including the Lutheran Churches.

The importance of the church condition in Germany will be understood in its full meaning when one considers this development as the result of a long historical process. We think of the large number of union attempts and union struggles since the days of Marburg, 1529. For two centuries the Lutheran churches manfully resisted the attempts of the Reformed churches to suppress Lutheranism in one way or another. We call attention to the heroic efforts to thwart the

efforts of the Elector Sigismund of Brandenburg to Calvinize his territory. During the darkest days of the Thirty Years' War the Lutheran Church was blessed with theologians and churchmen who, first at the colloquy of Leipzig, 1631, and later at the religious discussion at Thorn in 1645 (*Colloquium caritativum*), manfully opposed a proposed union of Lutherans and Reformed, because it compromised the truth of God's Word. In the nineteenth century, however, after Pietism and the Enlightenment and Rationalism had completed their disastrous work, the situation changed. In 1830 the Prussian Lutheran Church, the largest Lutheran body, suffered a defeat from which it has never recovered. For a time the other Lutheran *Landeskirchen* were careful lest they would be influenced by their unionistic neighbor. Gradually, however, the close proximity of unionism closed their eyes to the dangers which emanated from this unionistic body. In 1871 the German states formed a united kingdom, and the Lutheran *Landeskirchen* were expected to share with the Reformed churches the spirit of unity. For a short season the dangers of unionism became evident. But in the main the dangers have been ignored for the past seventy years. And now, in 1945, the final step is taken.

In the present reorganization of the churches the Lutheran provincial churches must take a position. The other (Reformed) confession bears the germ of unionism in its constitution and therefore advocates a union at any price. For the time being the struggle goes on, although the victory of the unionistic powers is as evident as the defeat of German Lutheranism. Why? Because the unionistic power which had broken into the camp of Lutheranism has robbed the Lutheran *Landeskirchen* of their one decisive and effective weapon: a confessional position which excludes and opposes every false church body. With this weapon, Lutheranism had formerly withstood all unionistic attempts. But when it forfeited this weapon, the Lutheran churches entered into a practical and unmistakable union with the Reformed and Evangelical Church (*Uniert*).<sup>3</sup> Such a Lutheranism is no longer dangerous, for its

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<sup>3</sup> This is in accord with the resolutions of the VELKD of Treysa, June, 1947. The second thesis reads: "There is agreement that the EKID is a federation of Lutheran, Reformed, and United churches. We trust that through a united listening to the Word of God in this federation a Church in the sense of the New Testament will be realized."



very genius which distinguishes it from the Reformed Church has disappeared, namely, the insistence on rejecting all false doctrines as the self-evident fruit of unconditional obedience to the Word of God. To such an emasculated Lutheran Church the right for further existence will, of course, be granted, for, after all, that which is essential for unionism has been gained.

Four centuries ago the loyal Lutheran theologians thwarted Calvin's ambitious plan to establish a pan-Protestant union. But Calvin's plan has become a reality in the twentieth century under the unionistic theologian Karl Barth, after the great unionist of the nineteenth century, Schleiermacher, had done the preparatory work. It is of secondary importance how the EKiD will ultimately be organized: whether there will be one organization for the German Church or two—a western and an eastern section. The important point is that unionism has gained the victory in the non-Roman sections of Germany, including the Lutheran provincial churches.

One more point must be presented to complete the picture of the EKiD. The new German union is moving in a wider circle than the old Prussian Union. It has connections with the spiritually related churches of the entire world. The ecumenical movement, started during the First World War, has gained in importance during the Second World War. The Lutheran State churches of Germany are no longer restricted to fellowship with the Reformed churches of the Western German provinces and of Switzerland, but stand in close relation to world Calvinism and Anglicanism. These strong ecclesiastical groups are quietly aiding in the building of the EKiD. The "unionistic crusades" of the Englishman John Duraeus, 1630—1690, are a thing of the past. But the past is not entirely gone, for the current unionistic crusades of middle Europe have become syncretistic crusades of a world-wide character. We are no longer concerned with the false doctrinal position of Calvinism in the traditional form. We are now confronted with all the apparent fruits of a gradual deviation from the clear Word of God and a leaning on human tradition. These errors are now offered for sale in the religious market of the world, and it is the function of the EKiD to see to it that buyers are available and that they will find delight in the proffered material. The EKiD is qualified to do



this, for essentially its principle is the same as that of the founders of the Prussian Union. Briefly it is this: The honorable men of the Reformation period have worked faithfully and in their Confessions have offered posterity much valuable material. But a serious consideration of their attempts prompts one to go beyond these men. One must find the focal point where the divergent lines of the Confessions finally meet. This focus is the Holy Scriptures in the sense of "the true Biblical unity." In other words, the point is reached when the bothersome confessional question loses all importance. During the first third of the nineteenth century, people were wont to say: The historical Confessions are superseded by the unity of a universally evangelical Christendom. The propagandists of the Prussian Union speak of this as the completion of the work of the Reformation. Today this same thought is expressed a little differently: The Lutheran, Reformed, and Evangelical churches must take their confessional basis very seriously; they dare, however, not forget that the Lord Jesus will shortly give them a new understanding of the truth according to His promise. Yes, in reality this has already been fulfilled inasmuch as conducting joint Communion services among Lutherans, Reformed, and Evangelicals is no longer considered to be contrary to the New Testament. Furthermore, it is evident that the dawn of a new period has come in which we are no longer concerned with the confessional question, but only with the simple either — or: for or against Christ.

This is a dangerous position, and represents the thinking of some who say that the New Testament Church was concerned about everything else except purity of doctrine and separation from all error. Likewise today only those congregations have the saving truth in whose midst "the confessing word" has become the efficient factor. In the relation of one congregation to another the question of false and true doctrine is out of order, for this disturbs the unity of the spirit and disrupts the body of Christ. Not *what* these congregations say of Christ is decisive, but *that* they somehow in active faith confess Christ and thus meet all anti-Christian elements.

That such a position opens the floodgates to various and manifold religious views is evident. Will not Lutheran pastors and congregations find Karl Barth's doctrines on Baptism and the Lord's Supper much more plausible than those of the

Lutheran Catechism, since Karl Barth also confesses Christ? Will it not be consistent to deny the substitutionary death of Christ as long as one is satisfied to find in the death of Christ somehow the love of God? Is it not more plausible to deny eternal damnation, since Scriptures can also be understood to teach the restoration of all things? Can one object if sincere Christians claim that they no longer need to live in daily contrition because in their confession to Christ they have reached the last rung of Christian perfection? The danger of syncretism is gigantic. Either the borderline of Christendom has become so fluid that men will end in the fog of fanaticism or, after a hopeless floundering on the sea of contradictory human opinion, will finally seek refuge in the man-made and apparently secure harbor of Rome. The tendencies for such a development are present in the current Church, and the Lutheran provincial churches are in the midst of it.

The situation is very similar to the conditions existing in the second century of the Christian era. Probably the most serious struggle for its existence took place when the waves of Gnosticism with their ecstatic syncretistic piety threatened to destroy the Christian Church. It seems that the conditions that prevail in the Church during its end period resemble the conditions of its beginning. At any rate, it is evident that the Lutheran Church today finds itself in a most difficult situation and that it is threatened to be drawn into the syncretistic process through which it will lose the pure doctrine and the unadulterated Gospel and end in dissolution. This danger for the Lutheran Church in Germany is greater than the physical distress of the German people. And the dire situation of German Lutheranism may someday become the plight of the Lutheran Church throughout the world.

We ask: Do the members of the German Lutheran provincial churches see the great danger? We believe that the number of those who see it is not small. On the other hand, we believe that the majority is of the opinion that the Lutheran churches of Germany will be able to meet the danger effectively and conquer it. Is this hope warranted? The answer to this question can be given only when we examine what the VELKD in reality is and what it is not.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This examination will be offered in the second installment of this article. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

## The Consensus of Sandomierz

### A Chapter from the Polish Reformation

(A Conference Essay)

By JAROSLAV PELIKAN, JR.

From April 9 to 14, 1570, representatives of Polish Calvinism, of Polish Lutheranism, and of the Bohemian Brethren met in the city of Sandomierz in southwestern Poland and signed a document acknowledging each other's confessions and doctrines as orthodox and looking forward to the time when all three could be united in one confession and one national Polish Church; that document was the so-called Consensus Sendomiriensis, the Consensus of Sandomierz. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the conditions which produced it, and to explain the circumstances under which it was adopted.

#### I

The synod of Sandomierz opened on Sunday, April 9, 1570, with common worship and the election of the officers.<sup>1</sup> On Monday, the leaders of the Lutheran delegation began the actual negotiations with an admonition to "strengthen the sacred bonds that we might be, as we also are, one kingdom of Christ and one vineyard of the Lord of hosts." In a similar vein, Andrew Pražmovský, plenipotentiary representative of the Unitas Fratrum, expressed the hope of his communion for the establishment of peace and suggested that perhaps the Confessio Bohemica of 1535 might be the ideal confession for the united churches. But Paul Gilowski, one of the leaders of the Reformed Church in Minor Poland, had another suggestion, namely, that the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566,

<sup>1</sup> The chief source for the narrative of the synod is the detailed account by Šimon Bohumil Turnowski, a leader of the Bohemian Brethren in Poland; cf. Theodor Wotschke, "Joh. Turnowski. Ein Senior der böhmischen Brüder," *Aus Posens kirchlicher Vergangenheit*, I (1911), 73—111. The account is entitled "Iter Sendomiriense," and Jaroslav Bidlo claims that the original manuscript is, or was, in Posen; to my knowledge it has never been critically edited. Cf. Bidlo, *Jednota bratrská v prvním vyhnání*, II (Prague, 1903), 150, n., 5. I have been forced to depend upon the translation presented by Georg Fischer, *Versuch einer Geschichte der Reformation in Polen*, I (Grätz, 1855), 257—86, and upon the additional material supplied by Daniel Ernest Jablonski, *Historia consensus Sendomiriensis* (Berlin, 1731), esp. pp. 39—60. For a brief evaluation cf. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (3d ed., New York, 1881—82), I, 581—88.

already translated into Polish and provided with an appropriate preface, would be more suitable.<sup>2</sup> The rest of the day was devoted to the Lutheran objections to both the Bohemian and the Helvetic confessions, and to the defense of the former by Simon Turnowski.

After this inauspicious beginning, the sessions of the Synod were opened on Tuesday with the report that the Lutherans and Reformed of Lithuania had come to an agreement in Wilno on March 2. Spurred on by this report, the Synod returned to the reading of the Polish translation of the Helvetic Confession and to a debate on the accuracy and adequacy of its formulations, particularly on the Lord's Supper, with both the Bohemian Brethren and the Lutherans objecting to certain words and phrases.

Finally, on Wednesday, the reading and discussion of the Confession were completed, and the matter of adopting it came to a vote. Though still desirous of having their own confession adopted for the entire group, the representatives of the Bohemian Brethren stated their satisfaction with the Helvetic Confession and their willingness to accept it as the basis of union. "The eyes of all," writes Jablonski, "were now turned on the Saxons." Under the pressure of this switch in the tactics of the Bohemians and of the earnest exhortations of all present, the Lutherans agreed to the composition of a new confession, with the proviso that they be allowed to retain the Augsburg Confession as a separate creedal statement; to this everyone consented.

As an incentive and model for their efforts, the agreement of the Reformed and Lutherans in Wilno was read the following day; and on April 14, as a climax to the synod, all three communions adopted and signed the following statement, the Consensus of Sandomierz:<sup>3</sup>

"Since, after many long conflicts with sectarians, Tritheites, Ebionites, and Anabaptists, we have nevertheless emerged, by the grace of God, from so many great struggles and de-

<sup>2</sup> The *Confessio Helvetica posterior* is reprinted in Schaff, *op. cit.*, III, 233-306, and his introductory remarks, I, 390-420; on the Polish translation, cf. Jerzy Lehmann, *Konfesja Sandomierska na tle innych konfesji w Polsce XVI wieku* (Warsaw, 1937), pp. 105-29.

<sup>3</sup> For my translation of the Consensus I have followed the edition in H. A. Niemeyer, *Collectio Confessionum in Ecclesiis Reformatis Publicatarum* (Leipzig, 1840), pp. 553-61.

plorable contentions, it was decided by those Reformed and orthodox churches of Poland which seemed to the enemies of the truth and of the Gospel to be in least agreement in certain articles and formulas of doctrine to call a Synod in the interest of peace and concord and to attest their mutual consensus. Therefore, after a friendly and Christian conference, we agree to these articles with minds thus joined and agreed.

"First. As both we who in the present Synod have published our confession and the Bohemian Brethren have never believed that those who adhere to the Augsburg Confession feel otherwise than piously and orthodoxly about God and the Holy Trinity, also the incarnation of the Son of God and our justification and other principal articles of our faith; so also those who follow the Augsburg Confession have openly and sincerely confessed that they, on the other hand, know of nothing in the confession of our churches or that of the Bohemian Brethren concerning God and the Holy Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, justification, and other primary articles of the Christian faith which would be contrary to the orthodox truth and the pure Word of God. And there we have mutually and unanimously promised according to the rule of God's Word that we shall defend this mutual consensus in the true and pure religion of Christ against Papists, against sectarians, against all the enemies of the Gospel and the truth.

"Moreover, as far as the unfortunate difference of opinion on the Lord's Supper is concerned, we agree on the meaning of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they have been orthodoxly understood by the fathers, and especially by Irenaeus, who said that this mystery consists of two elements, namely, an earthly and a heavenly one.<sup>4</sup> Nor do we assert that those elements or signs are bare and empty; we state, rather, that at the same time by faith they actually [*re ipsa*] exhibit and present that which they signify. Finally, to put it more clearly and expressly, we have agreed to believe and confess that the substantial presence of Christ is not merely signified, but that the body and blood of the Lord are represented, distributed, and exhibited to those who eat by the

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<sup>4</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book IV, chap. 18, sec. 5, in A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (ed.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, I (New York, 1908), 486.

symbols applied to the thing itself, and that the symbols are not at all bare, according to the nature of the Sacraments. But lest the diversity of manners of speaking bring forth another controversy, we have decided by mutual consent, in addition to the article which is inserted into our Confession, to add the article of the Confession of the Saxon churches on the Lord's Supper, sent to the Council of Trent in 1551, which we acknowledge as correct and have accepted. These are the words of that Confession:<sup>5</sup>

"Also men are taught that sacraments are actions instituted of God, and that without the use whereunto they are ordained the things themselves are not to be accounted for a sacrament; but in the use appointed, Christ is present in this communion, truly and substantially, and the body and blood of Christ is indeed given to the receivers; that Christ does witness that He is in them and does make them His members and that He does wash them in His blood, as Hilary also says, "These things being eaten and drunk do cause both that we may be in Christ and that Christ may be in us." Moreover, in the ceremony itself we observe the usual order of the whole ancient Church, both Latin and Greek. We use no private masses, that is, such wherein the body and blood of Christ is not distributed; as also the ancient Church, for many years after the Apostles' times had no such masses, as the old descriptions which are to be found in Dionysius, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Augustine, and others do show.'

"We have decided to be bound by this holy and mutual consensus, and have agreed that just as they regard us, our churches, our confession published in this Synod, and that of the Brethren as orthodox, so also we shall treat their churches with the same Christian love and acknowledge them as orthodox. We shall avoid the extreme and impose utter silence upon all bickering, disagreement, and controversy by which the course of the Gospel is impeded to the great offense of many pious people, and from which there comes a severe calumny by our adversaries and contradiction to our true Christian religion. Rather let the occasion be provided to strive for public peace and tranquillity, to exercise mutual

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<sup>5</sup> There is a sixteenth-century English translation of the *Confessio Saxonica* in M. Reu, *The Augsburg Confession* (Chicago, 1930), II, 411-18. I reprint here only the second paragraph.



charity; we should also offer our labors for the building up of the church in our fraternal union.

"For this reason we have agreed by mutual consent to persuade all our brethren with utmost zeal and to invite them to increase, build up, and conserve this Christian and unanimous Consensus, to nourish it and testify to it, especially by the hearing of the Word (by attending the services first of one, then of another of the confessions) and the use of the Sacraments, observing the proper order and manner of the discipline and custom of each church.

"We leave the rites and ceremonies of each church free by this concord. For it does not matter much what rites are observed, as long as the doctrine itself and the foundation of our faith and salvation are kept intact and incorrupt. So the Augsburg Confession itself and the Saxon Confession teach on this matter;<sup>6</sup> and in this our Confession published in this Synod of Sandomierz we have expressed the same thing.

"We have therefore promised and decided to compare counsels and works of charity among ourselves, and in the future to consult about the conservation and growth of all the pious, orthodox, and Reformed churches of the entire realm of Lithuania and Samogitia, as well as [the formation of] one body. And if they ever hold general synods, let them inform us; and when called to our general synods, let them feel free to come. And to put a colophon to this consensus and mutual concord, we do not think it would be inappropriate for the saving and assuring of this fraternal society to gather in a certain place, where, forced to this by improbity of the enemies of truth, we would draw up a compend of the body of doctrine (one out of the several Confessions) and publish it, that the mouths of evil men may be stopped to the great comfort of all the faithful in the name of all the Polish, Lithuanian, and Samogitian Reformed churches which agree with our confession.

"Having given and joined our right hands, therefore, we have sacredly promised and mutually agreed that we want to build up and nurture faith and peace and to strive more and

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<sup>6</sup> The reference is, of course, to Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis, 1921), p. 47; the reference to the Saxon Confession is more obscure, though it may be to the defense of the Lutheran rite in Reu, *op. cit.*, p. 414. See the interpretation by Werner Elert, *Morphologie des Luthertums*, I (Munich, 1931), 234-40.

more for the building of the kingdom of God, avoiding all occasions for the alienation of the churches. Finally, we agree that unmindful and forgetful of ourselves, as is proper for true ministers of God, we shall promote the glory solely of Jesus Christ our Savior and contend for the truth of His Gospel in word and deed.

"That this might be fixed sure and firm forever we pray with ardent petitions to God the Father, the Author and abundant Fountain of all consolation and peace, who rescued us and our churches from the morass of the Papacy and endowed us with the pure and holy light of His Word. May He deign to bless this our holy peace, consensus, conjunction, and union to the glory of His name and the building up of the Church. Amen."

## II

Like every statement of faith, the Consensus of Sandomierz was an answer to a need, in this case the need of a solid Protestant front against Roman Catholicism on the one hand and Socinianism on the other. An understanding of the Consensus involves a consideration of this need as well as a discussion of the attitudes of the three communions involved.

In the quarter century between 1548 and 1573, designated by Paul Fox as the period of the "triumph and dominance" of Protestantism in Poland,<sup>7</sup> the attempts of the Roman Catholic Church to win back lost ground in Poland grew in size and intensity. In 1556 the Pope had sent Aloysius Lippomani to Poland as his nuncio, and in 1563 Francesco Commendone. Their hand was strengthened in 1569 by the introduction of the Society of Jesus, one of whose members, Antonio Possevino, remembered for his work in Russia, provided much of the literature of the Polish Counter Reformation.<sup>8</sup> Also prominent in the effort to save Poland from Protestantism was Luther's opponent Johann Cochlaeus (1479—1552). Fearing an alliance of Saxony, Poland, and Bohemia against Rome, he became alarmed when a number of young Polish noblemen

<sup>7</sup> Paul Fox, *The Reformation in Poland. Some Social and Economic Aspects* (Baltimore, 1924), p. 40.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Carl Sommervogel (ed.), *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Part I, *Bibliographie*, VI (Brussels and Paris, 1895), 1061—93, for a list of his writings, most of them directed against Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

were enrolled at Wittenberg<sup>9</sup> and were being encouraged by Melanchthon.<sup>10</sup> And though he was quite sure by 1540 that Poland was saved,<sup>11</sup> he nevertheless traveled there and continued to supply literature for Poland as late as 1550.<sup>12</sup>

In Poland, itself, meanwhile, the outstanding proponent of what came later to be known as "ultramontanism" was the Bishop of Ermland, Stanislaus Hosius (1504—79).<sup>13</sup> Fanatical in his hatred of everything Protestant, Hosius ought perhaps to receive most of the credit for the ultimate return of Poland to Roman Catholicism. Testimony to this hatred as well as to his zeal in expressing it are his collected works, published in two large volumes, and especially such a work as his *Confutatio Prolegomenon Brentii*, directed, as the title indicates, against a work by the great Swabian reformer, Johann Brenz.<sup>14</sup>

Polish Protestantism was, then, under great pressure from the Roman Catholic right, "the enemies of the truth and of the Gospel," as the Consensus calls them. Equally great, however, and much more embarrassing to the three communions which participated in the synod was the Socinian left, the "sectarians, Tritheites, Ebionites, and Anabaptists" to whom reference is made in the opening sentence of the document. While dealing with the Roman Catholics, the Polish Protestants were always aware of the Unitarians, too; and in making clear their antithesis to the Catholic view, they had to keep clear of the Unitarian or Socinian view.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The earliest report Cochlaeus had of this was around December 24, 1533: *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzten Aktenstücken*, I (Gotha, 1892), No. 51, p. 156, and Walter Friedensburg's note, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, XVIII (1898), 243 (henceforth abbreviated ZKG); he was sure of it in the spring of the following year, Cochlaeus to Aleander, April 12, 1534, ZKG, XVIII, 246.

<sup>10</sup> Cochlaeus' anger was directed particularly at Melanchthon in the Polish question. Cf. Cochlaeus to Aleander, September 8, 1534, ZKG, XVIII, 255. His books against Melanchthon were for the sake of the Poles. Cochlaeus to Johann Fabri, October 28, 1534, ZKG, XVIII, 260.

<sup>11</sup> Cochlaeus to Bishop Giberti of Verona, January 31, 1540, ZKG, XVIII, 423.

<sup>12</sup> Cochlaeus to Cardinal Cervino, November 24, 1540, ZKG, XVIII, 438; and April 27, 1550, *ibid.*, 633.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Michael Ott, "Hosius," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII (New York, 1913), 473—75.

<sup>14</sup> *D. Stanislavi Hosii Opera omnia*, edited by Stanislaus Rescius (Cologne, 1584), I, 417—609; cf. Brenz to Duke Albrecht of Prussia, September 24, 1558, Th. Pressel (ed.), *Anecdota Brentiana* (Tübingen, 1868), p. 451.

<sup>15</sup> An interesting parallel suggests itself in the predicament of certain liberal Calvinists in New England at the beginning of the last cen-

Coming out of a combination of humanistic and nominalistic thought,<sup>16</sup> the Unitarianism of the Renaissance and Reformation began in Italy, but soon thereafter moved to Poland. In interpreting this fact, we may well adopt the explanation suggested by Harnack: "That the Italians were attracted to Poland cannot be explained merely from the great freedom that prevailed there in consequence of the permanent anarchy (sovereignty of the great landed proprietors); we must rather remember that there was perhaps no other country in Europe in the sixteenth century whose towns were so Italian as those of Poland."<sup>17</sup>

In Poland the Unitarians had gained new converts not only from Catholicism, but also from the Reformed and Lutheran camps.<sup>18</sup> Objecting to the many Catholic elements still retained in Protestant dogma and worship, they revised the classic Protestant estimates of sin, of free will, of the person of Christ, and, therefore, of the Trinity. Others in Poland, meanwhile, had become so aroused over the "Sabellianism" of Francesco Stancaro (1501—74) that they had stressed the distinction between the persons of the Trinity at the expense of the unity of the Godhead, thus laying themselves open to the charge of Tritheism.<sup>19</sup>

The Consensus of Sandomierz was called forth, then, not only by the vigorous counterreformatory activity of Roman Catholicism, but also by the embarrassing presence of Socinianism and Unitarianism. Both these extremes made it politically necessary for the Protestants of Poland to declare their faith; for despite his Protestant sympathies<sup>20</sup> Sigismund

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tury; they were also caught between a conservative position to which they could no longer hold and the radical Unitarian position, with which they refused to be identified.

<sup>16</sup> See Tadeus Grabowski, *Literatura aryanska w Polsce* (Posnan, 1908).

<sup>17</sup> Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma* (English ed., New York, 1903), VII, 135.

<sup>18</sup> See Theodor Wotschke's refutation of the claim that the Unitarians came only from among the Reformed: "Wittenberg und die Unitarier Polens," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, XIV (1917), 123—42.

<sup>19</sup> On Stancaro cf. the article by H. Schmidt in *Realenzyklopädie für die protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, XVIII (Leipzig, 1906), 752—54, and the bibliography cited there; see also the resolution against his teachings adopted at Sandomierz in Jablonski, *Historia*, pp. 56—57.

<sup>20</sup> More than any other scholar, Karl Völker has helped to elucidate the complex interrelations between the political and the religious situation in sixteenth-century Poland. Most relevant to the material at hand

Augustus, the Polish king, had been urging that they adopt a unified confession. Indeed, as Jaroslav Bidlo summarizes the situation, "the king was willing to grant the Protestants freedom for that faith or confession on which they would agree so that they would make up only one religious party."<sup>21</sup> And just as the Lublin Union of 1569 between Poland and Lithuania had called forth the Wilno agreement referred to above, so the political situation in Poland called for united Protestant action. In view of these circumstances, we may agree with the great Polish historian Józef Szujski that the Consensus of Sandomierz "became the reason why in the next election the dissident party did not play any role. It was primarily a political union."<sup>22</sup>

### III

Such were the political and religious circumstances which produced the Consensus of Sandomierz; it remains now to analyze the reasons why each of the participating churches agreed to the Consensus, considering first the Calvinists.

"We may certainly say," writes Hermann Dalton, "that the famous union formula of Sandomierz is the late and mature fruit of Laski's work; in its content we see again the beautiful spiritual features of our friend."<sup>23</sup> Best known for his work in England during the Edwardian Reformation in 1551,<sup>24</sup> John a Lasco or Laski (1499—1560) had worked for the ideal of a united Polish Protestantism all his life. This ideal he was willing to achieve even at the expense of theological accuracy; thus, it took Johann Brenz considerable time to persuade Laski that his completely Calvinistic view of the Lord's Supper was not the same as that of the Augsburg Confession.<sup>25</sup> He was

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are three studies: "Der Protestantismus in Oesterreich und Polen im Ringen um seine Rechtsstellung," ZKG, LIII (1934), 542—70; "Die Glaubensfreiheit in den Städten Polens," Zeitschrift für osteuropäische Geschichte, IX (1934), 67—88; "Der Kampf des Adels gegen die geistliche Gerichtsbarkeit in seiner Tragweite für die Reformation in Polen," Harnack-Ehrung zum 70. Geburtstag (Leipzig, 1921), pp. 317—27.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>22</sup> Józef Szujski, *Dzieje Polski*, II (Krakow, 1894), 399.

<sup>23</sup> Hermann Dalton, *Johannes a Lasco. Beitrag zur Reformationsgeschichte Polens, Deutschlands und Englands* (Gotha, 1881), p. 570.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism* (Chicago, 1939), pp. 90—92, for his activity in England; on his early career, see p. 75, n. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Brenz to Hartmann Beyer in Franckfort, September 2, 1556, *Anecdota*, pp. 432—33; for a commentary on Brenz' attitude toward Laski cf. Dalton, *op. cit.*, p. 520.

nevertheless a thoroughgoing Calvinist; witness his treatise on the Lord's Supper of April 15, 1558, in which the age-old objections to the Lutheran view are rehearsed: it conflicts with the doctrine of the ascension, with the doctrine of Christ's true humanity, and with the general doctrine of the Sacraments.<sup>26</sup>

From this fact it is apparent that what Laski wanted was not only compromise: he sought a national Polish Church, with a new confession. That was the ideal of the Consensus, too. The Consensus attempted to set up that Church on the basis of equal participation by all three communions; but, like Laski, the Reformed sought what Karl Kratzke has called "subordination of the Lutherans to the Calvinists."<sup>27</sup> Having once persuaded the Polish Lutherans to go along with them in the Consensus, the Polish Calvinists tried to palm off the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566 as the official confession of the new Polish national Church.<sup>28</sup> Because the Consensus made such a strategy possible, the Polish Calvinists agreed to the Consensus of Sandomierz.

But in many ways the most significant aspect of the Consensus is the fact that it brought about some degree of understanding between the Lutherans and the Unity of Bohemian Brethren. From its very inception, the Unity had looked for co-operation with other groups which wanted to be Christian without being Roman Catholic — with the Waldensians, the Eastern Orthodox, and, ultimately, the Protestants of Germany and Switzerland. With Martin Luther, it will be remembered, they carried on extensive negotiations, which culminated in his endorsement of the *Confessio Bohemica* of 1535.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, the Brethren corresponded with John Calvin and Henry Bullinger<sup>30</sup> and continued to figure prominently

<sup>26</sup> Joh. a Lasco, *Opera*, edited by A. Kuyper, II (Amsterdam, 1866), 755ff. For a detailed discussion of Laski's theories about the Eucharist see Karl Hein, *Die Sakramentslehre des Johannes a Lasco* (Berlin, 1904).

<sup>27</sup> Karl Kratzke, *Johannes a Lasco und der Sacramentsstreit* (Leipzig, 1901, p. 172).

<sup>28</sup> Bidlo, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>29</sup> On the negotiations leading up to Luther's endorsement of the *Confessio* and the endorsement itself, see Jaroslav Pelikan, "Luther and the *Confessio Bohemica*" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, the University of Chicago, 1946).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Georg Loesche, *Luther, Melancthon und Calvin in Österreich-Ungarn* (Tübingen, 1909), pp. 261–307.



in the struggle for the unity of the Church well into the seventeenth century.<sup>31</sup>

Always strong in the Unity, the irenic and ecumenical spirit grew ever stronger during their stay in Poland.<sup>32</sup> Faced with an active Lutheran party and an energetic Reformed group, they sought various possible means of effecting a rapprochement among the various churches. It is interesting to note, however, that the role of the Unity in such a rapprochement had radically changed in one generation. Formerly, as in the aforementioned *Confessio* of 1535, the Unity had acted as the mediating party between the Lutheran and the Reformed extremes. But in Poland the Brethren often seemed to represent a position farther removed from the Lutherans than was the Reformed view.<sup>33</sup> Thus, two months before the Synod of Sandomierz, on February 14–17, 1570, the Polish Lutherans and the Brethren had met in Poznan for discussion; but the comparison of the Augsburg Confession and the *Confessio Bohemica* led to a debate on ubiquity, on pedobaptism, and on the presence of Christ in the Sacrament, which split the conference wide open.<sup>34</sup>

As a result, the Brethren were pleased to find in the Consensus of Sandomir a formula on which the three communions could agree as a basis for discussion; and even though they were frustrated in their attempt to have the *Confessio Bohemica* adopted by the other groups, they were willing to co-operate in the Consensus because it brought about the possibility of an understanding with the Lutherans.

These circumstances might explain the attitude of the Polish Calvinists and of the Bohemian Brethren. But what of the Lutherans? How account for the fact that they went

<sup>31</sup> The Brethren were represented by John Amos Comenius (1591 to 1670) at the *collegium charitativum* in Thorn in 1645; Matthew Spinka, *John Amos Comenius, That Incomparable Moravian* (Chicago, 1943), pp. 101–15.

<sup>32</sup> The most complete treatment of the activity of the Brethren in Poland is that of Jaroslav Bidlo, referred to in note 1 above. For a short summary, see Theodor Wotschke, *Geschichte der Reformation in Polen* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 133–43.

<sup>33</sup> On the controversies between the Brethren and the Lutherans which led to this shift cf., in addition to Bidlo, Jablonski's *Historia*, pp. 12–35. For a discussion of the entire relationship between the Brethren on the one hand and the Lutherans and Reformed on the other cf. the essay by Ján Kvačala, "Styky Jednoty Bratros Českých s Flaciom a Laským," reprinted in his collected essays, *Viera a Veda* (Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš, 1911, pp. 241–81.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Bidlo, *op. cit.*, pp. 147–49.

along on a plan to form a federation, or union, of the various Protestant communions in Poland? I would submit at least two considerations which help to explain the Lutheran position.

For one thing, the Consensus — indeed, the entire union movement of which the Consensus is the climax — had the blessing of the theological faculty of the University of Wittenberg. Philip Melanchthon had been very influential in Poland and had carried on extensive correspondence with Polish Protestant leaders.<sup>35</sup> Testimony to his abiding influence is the inclusion in the Consensus of his *Confessio Saxonica* of 1551. The men who were prominent at Wittenberg during this time — Paul Eber (1511–68), Caspar Peucer, Melanchthon's son-in-law (1525–1602), George Major (1502–74) — were all Melanchthonian in their orientation and therefore inclined to look with favor upon any movement for church union.

As has been pointed out, the chief obstacle in the way of union in Poland was the relations between the Lutherans and the Bohemian Brethren. In 1568 the Wittenberg faculty had said of the Brethren: "We have read your Confession before and recognized that in most parts of doctrine and in all the chief articles it agrees with the Confession of our Church, although certain things are expressed in less detail and there is some variety in church practices. Since we do, however, agree in the foundation and in the doctrine necessary for salvation, we have never held that your Church and our Church are alien."<sup>36</sup>

What effect such a statement from the Wittenberg faculty could have on the Polish Lutherans can be gauged from an examination of the Polish students who had been at Wittenberg and who were now old enough to participate in Polish affairs. From 1554 till 1565, inclusive, there had been at least forty-seven Polish noblemen and sixty-eight Polish commoners — a total of 115 men — in residence at Wittenberg.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> On Melanchthon's relations with Poland cf. Loesche, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–72; on his correspondence, Theodor Wotschke, "Zum Briefwechsel Melanchthons mit Polen," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, VI (1909), 350–57.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Wotschke, *Geschichte*, p. 241. Cf. a similar statement of February 8, 1573, quoted at length in Jablonski, *Historia*, pp. 68–69; and of November 3, 1575, *ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>37</sup> The following figures are compiled from the Wittenberg roster reprinted in Karl E. Förstemann (ed.), *Album Academiae Vitebergensis*, I (Leipzig, 1841) and II (Halle, 1894).

Year	Noblemen	Commoners	Year	Noblemen	Commoners
1554	12	21	1560	8	4
1555	2	1	1561	3	3
1556	1	9	1562	1	0
1557	0	1	1563	4	2
1558	5	9	1564	0	9
1559	12	6	1565	8	3

This meant that a considerable segment of Polish Lutheranism was under the influence of Wittenberg at the time of the Consensus.

Nor dare the fact be ignored that there is really nothing in the Consensus to which a Lutheran could not subscribe, though that document ignores certain things which a Lutheran would have been obliged to include.<sup>38</sup> But after all, was not its statement on the chief point of controversy, the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, Lutheran in origin and scope? The Consensus is not a confession; it is an agreement to co-operate until a confession can be drawn up, with the proviso, be it remembered, that the Lutherans may retain the Augsburg Confession as their own statement of faith.

In view of these facts, is it any wonder, then, that the Polish Lutherans should have yielded to the pressure exerted upon them, and agreed to the provisions of the Consensus? Under the circumstances, they could really have done little else.

United by their common opposition to Roman Catholicism and Unitarianism and drawn to the idea of union by various needs, the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Bohemian Brethren of Poland came to an agreement in the Consensus of Sandomierz of April 14, 1570. How and why that union failed is part of the tragic story of the Polish Counter Reformation and therefore lies outside the scope of this essay.<sup>39</sup>

Valparaiso, Ind.

<sup>38</sup> Fischer calls the stand of the Consensus "echtlutherisch," *op. cit.*, p. 176; and Johann Georg Walch admits that the Consensus was "mehr Lutherisch als Zwinglisch gedacht," *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die Religionsstreitigkeiten . . . ausser der Lutherischen Kirche*, III (Jena, 1734), 1047.

<sup>39</sup> See Werner Elert, *Morphologie des Luthertums*, II (Munich, 1932), 207, n. 1, for a suggestive comment on the relationship between Protestant disunity and the rapid decline of Polish Protestantism. It seems, however, that a complete discussion of the problem would have to go even beyond Elert in demonstrating that the disunity was not the efficient cause of the disappearance of Protestantism, and that the political events of 1572 were of great importance in that development.

### Contributors to This Issue

The three feature articles in this issue are related to a topic of immediate interest and deep concern to all Christians and to Lutherans in particular: Christian Fellowship Without Denial of One Word of God. The question of Lutheran fellowship occupied our Synod at Chicago; the problem of Lutheran world unity was the heart and core of Lund; and the thought of an ecumenical Christianity will be the central theme of the proposed Amsterdam meeting in 1948. The first article, "Luther's Concept of the *Una Sancta*," by your magazine's editor pro tem, originally appeared in *Christendom* and is republished with permission. *Christendom* is the publication of the American Committee for the World Council of Churches. The author endeavored to present Luther's view on the unity of the *Una Sancta* and the necessity of confessional consciousness to readers who are interested in a pan-Christian union and advocate an external ecumenicity.

The second article, dealing with the rather confused church situation in Germany, was prepared by Lic. Martin Kiunke. Pastor Kiunke was born August 27, 1898, in Breslau. At present he is the pastor of the congregation at Klitten, Oberlausitz (Russian Zone). Here he is gathering the dispersed members of the former flourishing Breslau Church in Silesia. He has been a member of the church council of the Breslau Synod and has been very active in the union endeavors between the Breslau Synod and the Saxon Free Church. Recently his church body appointed him professor for the proposed theological high school to be opened at Frankfurt am Main, where he will teach church history and related subjects. The topic of his dissertation for the licentiate is: "Johann Gottfried Scheibel und sein Ringen um die lutherische Reformation." His contribution to our magazine (written in German and translated by the managing editor pro tem) is an analysis of the current religious situation in Germany and an attempt to point out the main problems confronting the Lutheran Church. In this issue we shall bring the first part of his memorandum, dealing with the EKID. The second chapter will appear in an early issue and will present the church conditions as they affect the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The third article was prepared by Jaroslav Pelikan, Jr. This young author is the son of Pastor J. J. Pelikan, Chicago, Ill., of the Slovak Lutheran Church of America. He was graduated from Concordia College, Fort Wayne, in 1942; from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1946 (B.D.), and from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago in 1946 (Ph.D.). The title of his doctor's dissertation is: "Luther and the *Confessio Bohemica*." He is a member of the Department of History at Valparaiso University. Dr. Pelikan has made special studies in the field of the Lutheran Slovak Church history, an area relatively unknown to students of church history. His current contribution deals with a phase of union endeavors which is historically of considerable significance.

F. E. M.

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## Homiletics

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### The Nassau Pericopes

The homiletic material presented for the church year 1947—1948 differs from that of other years in a twofold way. First, we are presenting an entirely new series of pericopes, that of the Nassau System, gotten out by Bishop Heydenreich in 1843. His system presents texts for a period of seven years. We have not strictly chosen the texts of any one particular year, nor have we limited ourselves exclusively to texts from the four Gospels. Secondly, instead of the usual longer sermon outline, we are giving a few brief paragraphs referring to the suitability of the text for the particular Sunday, its meaning, any pitfalls that should be avoided, special emphases that need to be given, any problem that may present itself, and the goal which the preacher should have in mind. To this we are adding a very brief sermon outline. We trust that this change in texts and sermon material will appeal to our preachers.

J. H. C. FRITZ

#### THE NASSAU PERICOPEs

Texts are taken from Series A of the Nassau System. Those taken from another series of the same system are marked with an asterisk. Texts with double asterisks are our own choice.

1st Sunday in Advent	Luke 19:1-10
2d Sunday in Advent	Luke 17:20-25
3d Sunday in Advent	Luke 3:1-6
4th Sunday in Advent	John 8:12-14
Christmas	Luke 2:1-14
Sunday after Christmas	John 11:25-29 *
New Year's Eve	Matt. 25:14-30 **
New Year's Day	Luke 4:16-20 *
Sunday after New Year	John 4:5-14 *
Epiphany	Matt. 3:13-17 *
1st Sunday after Epiphany	John 1:43-51 **
2d Sunday after Epiphany	John 2:12-22 **
Septuagesima	John 6:66-71 *
Sexagesima	John 12:37-43 *
Quinquagesima	Matt. 20:20-28 *
Invocavit	Phil. 2:5-11 *
Reminiscere	John 13:1-17 *
Oculi	John 13:31-38 *
Laetare	Heb. 10:26-31 *
Judica	1 John 3:16-24 *
Palm Sunday	John 17:20-26 *

Maundy Thursday	Matt. 26:26-29 *
Good Friday	2 Cor. 5:18-21 **
Easter Sunday	Luke 24:1-9
Quasimodogeniti	Luke 24:36-48 *
Misericordias Domini	John 21:15-19 *
Jubilate	2 Cor. 4:10-18 *
Cantate	John 11:20-27 *
Rogate	Matt. 7:7-11 *
Ascension Day	John 14:1-6 *
Exaudi	1 Pet. 1:3-9
Pentecost	1 Cor. 12:1-11 *
Trinity Sunday	Matt. 28:16-20
1st Sunday after Trinity	Luke 12:13-21
2d Sunday after Trinity	1 John 2:15-17
3d Sunday after Trinity	Luke 7:36-50
4th Sunday after Trinity	Mark 6:17-29 *
5th Sunday after Trinity	Luke 10:17-24 *
6th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 18:7-9
7th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 14:14-23
8th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 7:24-27
9th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 25:14-30
10th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 21:33-44
11th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 5:1-12
12th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 6:9-15
13th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 11:28-30
14th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 7:13-14
15th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 6:19-23
16th Sunday after Trinity	Eph. 3:14-19 *
17th Sunday after Trinity	Mark 2:23-28
18th Sunday after Trinity	Mark 12:28-34 *
19th Sunday after Trinity	Rom. 5:1-5
20th Sunday after Trinity	Luke 9:28-36 *
21st Sunday after Trinity	John 9:1-11 *
22d Sunday after Trinity	Col. 3:12-15
23d Sunday after Trinity	(Reformation)
24th Sunday after Trinity	Mark 12:41-44 **
25th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 19:27-30 **
26th Sunday after Trinity	Matt. 25:1-13
Thanksgiving	

## FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

LUKE 19:1-10

*The Text and the Day.* — This story provides unexpected applications and fresh points of view for the beginning of the church year. "This day" and all of vv. 9 and 10 provide parallels to the Advent idea: a new day of grace, a new proclamation of the Gospel, now begins; let us greet it with Zacchaeus' zest and faith.

*Notes on Meaning.* — The "chief" of the tax collectors was suspected of special graft. — The setting of the story is the



final journey to Jerusalem, just prior to the Palm Sunday account of the Gospel for the Day. — 8: Zacchaeus “stands” before his accusers, makes his defense. That defense is that he restores and gives manifold what he owes. The present tenses may signify intention for the future (so many commentators). But they may also indicate existing practice which should stop the mouth of the accusers. 9: also a son of Abraham; cf. Rom. 4:3 ff.; and the opposite, Rev. 2:9; Phil. 3:2, 3. 10: the core of the Gospel of Christ; cf. John 3:17; Luke 5:32.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down” may be construed to be the converting invitation of Christ; then the works of charity are future intent; and the sermon may stress the converting power of the Gospel. In that case Zacchaeus’ interest in Christ before He spoke is preliminary to his conversion, a preparation for faith. Simpler, and more preachable, is the assumption that Zacchaeus harbored faith in Christ before and hence sought to behold Him (cf. Stoeckhardt); then his hospitality and charity are fruits of faith, the faith to which Jesus responds with forgiveness and blessing.

*Preaching Emphases.* — The outstanding lesson is the Savior’s attitude toward the sinner and the believing sinner’s attitude toward Christ. At the beginning of a new church year: Though Christians have heard the Gospel before, they welcome a new year of worship as a chance to come closer to Jesus; and Jesus, in return, guarantees His salvation and its fruits. — Jesus’ repudiation of self-righteous belittling of the converted sinner is not a point to stress in a sermon for this day.

*Problem and Goal.* — Christians who have heard the Gospel may find the new church year uninteresting and unchallenging. That is a symptom of the flesh. Rather will they as Christ’s men welcome each new proclamation of the Gospel of Christ with joy and be happy to reveal the fruits of that Gospel in their lives.

#### *Outline:*

### A NEW YEAR OF WORSHIP AND LIFE WITH JESUS

#### I. He promises to be Savior and Friend.

A. He gave Himself as man’s Redeemer.

B. He seeks the lost.

C. He rejoices to help and to be with His own.

II. Hence let us welcome Him zestfully.

- A. Our sins and problems ever remind us that we should seek Him.
- B. Despite preoccupations of life, we can find Him in the Gospel.
- C. Our whole life will be the reflection of His presence with us.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

LUKE 17:20-25

*The Text and the Day.* — The Gospel of the old pericopic series speaks of the coming of Christ to Judgment; also the Propers for the day. Our Gospel text likewise: "in His day."

*Notes on Meaning.* — Christ had been speaking of the Kingdom of God. The Pharisees asked when it would come. Their conception of the Kingdom was that of a kingdom of external power and glory. Not so, said Christ, but "the Kingdom of God is within you." Did Christ mean to say that the Kingdom of God is within the heart of the believers? Some commentators deny this, saying that the context forbids such an interpretation, for the Kingdom of God was not within the hearts of the Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking. These commentators translate "among you," Christ telling the Pharisees that in order to find the Kingdom of God, they would not have to go far nor wait long for it. Other commentators say that not the "you," but the "within" was stressed by Christ and that He, indeed, meant to stress the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God as it is effected in the hearts of believers. This, after all, is the thought that must be stressed over against the wrong conception which the Pharisees had of the Kingdom of God.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — It should be noted that, in the first part of the text, Jesus speaks to the Pharisees concerning the nature of the Kingdom of God and, in the second part, to His disciples on a new subject, the consummation of the Kingdom.

*Preaching Emphases.* — The season of Advent should not be lost sight of. Christ's advent into the flesh, His entire work of redemption, v. 25, had as its purpose His advent into the hearts of men by repentance and faith, and a hopeful and

cheerful looking forward by all believers to Christ's advent in glory on Judgment Day.

*Problem and Goal.* — Amidst temptations, tribulations, and trials, Christians at times grow weary and impatient, v. 22. In the text, Christ gives them the assurance of their salvation and of His sudden, v. 24, but sure appearance for their final deliverance and eternal happiness.

*Outline:*

**TWO ASPECTS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

- I. Its nature, as it is here upon this earth, vv. 20, 21.
  - A. Not an external kingdom of power and glory, v. 20; John 18:36, but
  - B. A spiritual Kingdom effected by faith in the hearts of men, vv. 21, 25; John 18:37; Rom. 14:17; John 3:3.
- II. Its final consummation at Christ's coming in glory, vv. 23-25.
  - A. Since Christ has completed His work of redemption, *we* are to look forward to His coming in glory, v. 25 (no so-called millennium), when He shall take His own unto Himself.
  - B. Christ's coming will be sudden, v. 24; no man knows when, Matt. 24:36. Therefore we should at all times be prepared, Matt. 24:42.
  - C. In the meantime we should patiently await Christ's coming, v. 22, and amidst temptations and trials be kept in faith through Word and Sacrament, 1 Pet. 1:3-9.

J. H. C. FRITZ

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**THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

LUKE 3:1-6

*The Text and the Day.* — Many Gospel-pericope systems have chosen selections for this Sunday which deal with the work and the message of John the Baptist. This text presents John the Baptist's powerful call to repentance, a call which is of utmost importance at the present time. Advent is essentially a preparatory season for Christmas, but the Christmas message falls on hearts of stone if those hearts are unrepentant.

*Notes on Meaning.* — The names of the potentates, vv. 1, 2, ought to receive more than a passing glance. They are the diorama in which we see the power and glamour of the world and the pride and the callousness of the misguided leaders of the Church. Rome and Jerusalem — what power! Yet what corruption, sin and hardheartedness! Against the confused philosophical welter of Rome, Greece, and Judaism there arises the Word of God, committed to a lonely, austere, but magnetic man in the Jordan valley. The rigor of the Law and the sweetness of the Gospel fall from his lips. The cardinal words of the text — “repentance,” “remission of sins,” “flesh,” “salvation” — have a familiar ring for every truly Christian minister. But only the Biblical meaning of these terms is the meaning which can be preached from our pulpits. The picturesque language of Isaiah’s words emphasizes the necessity of God’s working through His Word to effect conversion in men’s hearts. Modern bulldozers can push tons of earth with ease. Explosives invented by man can tear gaping holes into the soil. But no man would want to think of leveling the Rockies, the Himalayas, and other mountain ranges. That task defies human effort. Converting a human being, even one, defies all human effort. God alone effects conversion and causes man to embrace the salvation He has prepared in Christ. “All flesh” in v. 6 is a comprehensive term. All who repent and believe in Christ shall see the salvation of God for all eternity. Those who do not repent shall also see the salvation of God, but see it from across the bottomless pit, like the rich man in hell, and lament forever, because they failed to heed the call to repent.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — The names of international and national figures will not mislead a faithful ambassador of Christ to spend too much time on a dissertation on the alarming world situation today. Neither will he attempt to press every poetic expression of Isaiah into some spiritual counterpart. He recognizes the desperate need of the human heart in this era and gives his attention to preaching only the whole counsel of God.

*Preaching Emphases.* — Millions of words were spoken at recent criminal trials. Millions more are being spoken about the probable economic world collapse. Those words are nothing more than a breath of wind in the face of the Word that

has come to us in the Bible. That Word has effective power to turn man from darkness to light, from Satan to God, from hatred to love, from the pursuits of war to the pursuits of peace. Each age is essentially the same — godless, irreverent, apostate. In each age, God is ever the same, sending voices crying in a wilderness of sin that men should repent and turn back to Him. He promises forgiveness in Christ. No promise of His has ever been curtailed.

*Problem and Goal.* — Our problem, on the one hand, is to reach as many people as possible, including our parishioners. Our task, on the other hand, is to keep those with Christ who have learned to know Him and love Him. In both instances it is essential for people to realize what it means to repent and believe in Christ. The preacher cannot grow weary of preaching repentance, and the people, when they realize what repentance is, will not grow tired of hearing what the Word of God has to say on repentance and its blessed fruits.

*Outline:*

THE GREAT ADVENT CALL: "PREPARE YE THE WAY  
OF THE LORD!"

- I. Prepare in true repentance.
  - A. Realize your sinful state.
  - B. Turn to Christ with all your heart.
- II. Prepare by living God's Word.
  - A. Live the Christian life.
  - B. Lead others to Christ.
  - C. Seek the answer to all your problems in Christ.
  - D. Look to Christ for a peaceful departure from this life.

A. W. C. GUEBERT

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

JOHN 8:12-14

*The Text and the Day.* — Since it is the Sunday before Christmas, text and sermon should prepare for the festival, even as the Introit, the Collect, and the Gradual.

*Notes on Meaning.* — Man by nature is in the darkness of sin, leading him into eternal darkness, Is. 60:2. Christ is the Light of the world, v. 12. By His work of redemption, Christ

rescued man from the darkness of sin. Now those who follow Christ, believe in Him, shall have the light of life. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men," John 1:4. The followers of Christ no longer walk in the darkness of sin, v. 12. Their attitude towards God has been changed. He is now their Father, and they are His children. That changes their entire life. Their attitude toward man and their whole outlook upon things material have been changed. — The Pharisees did not accept the testimony of Christ, because He bore record of Himself. They would rule one single witness out of court, v. 13. But Jesus could bear record of Himself, because He is the eternal Son of God, sent by the Father for the redemption of the world and returning to the Father after the work had been completed, v. 14. Since His record is divine, no additional witness is needed. His Word is final. Christ speaks to us through the Scriptures.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — While it is true that we Christians, too, are the light of the world, Christ's light being reflected in us, Matt. 5:14, this is not mentioned in this text.

*Preaching Emphases.* — The emphasis in the text and in the sermon centers in Christ's word "I am the Light of the world."

*Problem and Goal.* — The preacher should not fail to tell why men still live in the darkness of sin. It is because of their unbelief. He should also not fail to tell that faith is not a mere historical acceptance of Christ and His work of redemption.

*Outline:*

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

- I. Why all men need this light, v. 12 b.
  - A. Man by nature is in the darkness of sin.
  - B. All misery in the world results from sin and finally leads to the eternal misery of hell.
- II. By His work of redemption, Christ became the Light of the world, v. 12 a.
  - A. As the sinner's Substitute, Christ fulfilled the Law, Gal. 4: 4, 5.
  - B. As the sinner's Substitute, He suffered the punishment of sin, 2 Cor. 5: 21.



III. Christ revealed Himself to us as the Light of the world, vv. 13-14.

A. As man could not redeem himself, so he could not know of God's plan of redemption.

B. Christ's self-revelation is unique but trustworthy, because He is the Son of God.

IV. Who shall have the light of life, v. 12 b?

A. Not those who continue in sin and unbelief, John 3:18-20, but

B. Those who repent, believe, and bring forth the fruits of faith, John 3:36, 21. J. H. C. FRITZ

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## CHRISTMAS DAY, 1947

LUKE 2:1-14

*The Text and the Day.*— Since the text is the wonderful account of St. Luke, of the birth of Jesus, the real Christmas story, no better text can be found for the anniversary of the Savior's birth. The Propers for this day, the Introit taken from Isaiah 9, the Collect stressing the fact that God was made man, the Epistle bringing the Christmas prophecy of the Old Testament from Isaiah, or the universality of salvation through Christ from Titus 2, all form a definite unit.

*Notes on Meaning.*— The first part of the text merely sets the stage for the miracle of the ages, determines the historical setting for the great event which has divided all time and gives the approximate date of the happening, the reasons for the long journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. All of these facts, however, are minor considerations. They are like the golden prongs that hold the precious jewel. Vv. 6 and 7 tell the miracle of Christmas, the greatest event in history, in the simplest, factual language. "She brought forth her first-born Son." These seven brief words in the original Greek, as well as in the English translation, certainly are a masterpiece of simple reporting. The statement "No room for them in the inn" makes room for many surmises as to the reason, but in reality is but a simple statement to explain why the newborn Savior was laid in a manger. Vv. 8 and 9 describe the first Christmas preacher, God's holy angel, the small, but devout

first Christmas congregation, the simple, but believing shepherds, and the first Christmas worship, held under the vaulted dome of the Palestinian skies. The Christmas message of the angelic preacher, recorded in vv. 10 and 12, is a message intended to remove fear, intended to bring happiness and joy based upon the wonderful Christmas fact that a Savior had come for all people, come in poverty and lowliness, but come to give God all glory. The last two verses of the text, describing the angel choir and the angel song, indicate that the purpose of Christ's coming is to glorify God and to bring peace to men.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Since the wonderful Christmas story is so old, Christmas preachers often feel rather helpless in preparing a Christmas sermon and look for novel, often rather foolish, ways and methods to present the Christmas message. They are very apt to get lost in a maze of dates, statistics, and historical facts, thinking only of the first section of the text. Another danger in the well-known Christmas Gospel for the preacher is the danger of stressing only minor details — the poverty of Jesus, the cruelty and heartlessness of the innkeeper, the beauty of the angels' song. Preachers with Modernistic leanings like to stress the human nature of Christ and forget the fact that He is Christ, the Lord. The heart of the message of Christmas, the joyous news of the coming of the Savior for the entire fallen human race, is all too easily pushed into the background.

*Preaching Emphases.* — In delivering the message of Christmas on the basis of the text, the emphasis should be on the simple, but all-important fact that God's only-begotten Son became a human being, our brother, in order to become our Savior. Cf. John 1: 14; Titus 2: 11, 13, 14 a. The lowliness, the humiliation of the divine Christ, may well be stressed, but we dare not forget the honor and the acclaim that is due Him who in spite of great lowliness is Christ the Lord, and due to God the Father, who out of love for the world gave His only-begotten Son.

*Problem and Goal.* — The problem is to make proud, sinful man realize the need of a Savior from sin and the fact that the lowly Son of the lowly maid of the house of David is the one and only Savior, and to give all Christmas worshipers the consoling truth that Christ is the Savior of *all mankind*, with-

out distinction of color, race, or social standing. Because the Christmas message is old, men are inclined to listen with deaf ears, but as long as we preach the Word, which is Spirit and life, God can produce marvelous results, which we cannot produce with the greatest of human philosophy or the most beautiful Christmas music and decorations.

*Outline:*

THE WONDERFUL BIRTH OF THE WONDERFUL CHILD

- I. The simple but interesting setting.
  - A. God's hand, in arranging matters, setting the stage for the most dramatic event in history (vv. 1-5).
  - B. The simple but miraculous birth. Mary the virgin, the Christ Child, God made man. (Vv. 6, 7.)
- II. The glorious announcement of the wonderful birth.
  - A. The angelic Christmas messenger (v. 9).
  - B. The angelic Christmas sermon (vv. 10-12).
  - C. The angelic Christmas song (vv. 13, 14).
- III. The wonderful purpose of the wonderful birth of Jesus.
  - A. He comes to save men from sin, from fear, from hopelessness and despair.
  - B. He comes to save all people, Jews and Gentiles, shepherds and scientists. He comes to save *us*, no matter what our situation in life may be.
  - C. He comes to glorify God and to bring peace, eternal peace, to man. E. L. ROSCHKE

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

JOHN 11:25-29

*The Text and the Day.* — The last Sunday in December, the end of the year, reminds us of the end of our days. Faith in the newborn Savior removes all fear of death, sustains us in our sorrows and bereavements, and gives us comfort and hope in our dying hour.

*Notes on Meaning.* — "Resurrection and life" are essentially the same; life is the opposite of death, and resurrection is the annulment of death. "Shall live" does not mean shall come to life on the day of resurrection, but continue to live from the moment of physical death. "Liveth and believeth in

Me" — to believe in Christ is to live in Christ, live forever. "Shall never die," more exactly, "in no way shall he die forever." "Believest thou this?" refers to who Christ is, not only to what He did. What Christ did has value only because He is the Son of God. "The Christ" embraces all that the Old Testament contains in its promises to Israel. Martha called Mary secretly so that the hostile Jews should not intercept the interview with the Savior which was to follow.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — The words of Jesus, vv. 25, 26, are Gospel throughout. Martha shows by her confession that she understood not only who Jesus was, but also the purpose of His coming. While the context is not to be ignored, the text will stand alone. The statement is general that whosoever believes in Jesus shall never die in the sense in which death is usually regarded by men. What happened in the raising of Lazarus gave proof to the words of Jesus, but we believe even though we do not see.

*Preaching Emphases.* — V. 27 is of primary importance. Faith in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, must be stressed. The sting of death is sin. Christ atoned for all sin, and thus death has lost its sting. Indeed, death is abolished because sin has been removed. All that Christ has procured for us is appropriated by faith, i. e., not a mere historic or intellectual acceptance of the truths regarding Christ's person and work, but trust and confidence of the heart. Through faith the believer is joined to Christ, who is Life itself. Hence there is no real death for the believer. Death is merely the entrance into the fullness of life.

*Problem and Goal.* — True Christmas joy is produced by faith in the newborn Savior. Such joy shall and will accompany the believer throughout his life, also in days of sorrow and bereavement, indeed, even in the hour of death, if he will remain steadfast in his faith.

#### *Outline:*

#### FAITH WHICH OVERCOMES DEATH

##### I. The nature of such faith.

A. Not any faith, but faith in Jesus Christ.

B. Not faith in Christ, a mere teacher or founder of a new religion, but in Christ the Redeemer, who came to overcome death.

- C. Not a mere intellectual knowledge of this truth, but trust and confidence in Christ and His work.

II. The power of such faith.

- A. The believer, it is true, must die.  
B. But in death he does not lose life, but enters into eternal life.  
C. He does not, like the unbeliever, experience the terror of death.

WALTER A. BAEPLER

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## NEW YEAR'S EVE

MATT. 25:14-30

*The Text for This Occasion.* — The text is one of the parables of Jesus. The whole parable may be used, in order to make the sermon completely textual; but on an occasion like New Year's Eve, when the minds of people are tense, it may be better to select one or more verses for the text and to supply the rest in the sermon. V. 14 could readily be used as a short text to captivate the attention of the hearers. The worshiper feels the nearness of the end of the year. He is reminded of the end of life and of the end of the world. It is a good time to impress the great truths of our faith in Christ.

*Notes on Meaning.* — The Savior's oft-repeated expression "The kingdom of heaven is like" can readily be paraphrased by "in religion it is like this." A talent was a very large sum of money, sometimes given as ten thousand dollars. It is used in the parable to bring out the fact that the Lord is giving us very great gifts and opportunities and expects great use of them. The Lord's gifts to us are not picayune trifles that may be disregarded at will.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Every parable was given by the Savior to teach one definite lesson, and everything in the parable has the purpose of making that one lesson clearer and more significant. Outside the one lesson the other parts have no special significance of their own. They must not be stressed as having a teaching of their own. It would be folly to make any applications based on the treatment of these three men to the business methods of today.

*Preaching Emphases.* — The lesson of the text is that God regulates the lives of His children on earth, that He gives to all duties to perform and responsibilities to undertake, each according to his ability, and that He expects everyone to exercise true stewardship, to make use of the gifts and opportunities that he has, and that God will take everyone to account for the use he made of his gifts and opportunities. On New Year's Eve these lessons can be woven into the situation that presents itself at the close of the year.

*Problem and Goal.* — The goal should be to counter the present-day seeking for pleasure at the end of the year and to inculcate serious thoughts. Our faces should be turned backward: to see what God has done for us in the past year, to think with repentant hearts about our sins of omission; and we should renew our resolve to be better followers of the Savior in the year to come.

*Outline:*

Often in history certain years have been given special names. 47 B. C. was called the Year of the Great Confusion, because it was the beginning of the Julian Calendar. There was great confusion of dates. 1882 was called the Year of the Great Comet. 1517 is the Year of the Reformation. The past year may be called

#### THE YEAR OF GOD-GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES

- I. God regulated our lives and led us in His paths.
- II. God gave us opportunities to care for our souls and to serve our fellow men.
- III. God expected us to make proper use of these opportunities, and He demands an accounting from us.

As we see and admit and repent of our failures, let us flee to the mercy and grace of God in Jesus, our Savior, and implore the Lord's help to do better in the new year.

FREDERIC NIEDNER





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## Miscellanea

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### Preaching the Gospel to the Unchurched

#### Excerpts from a Chapter of Lutheran Pastoral Theology for India

In this brief paper, presented in fragmentary form, merely a few important considerations can be stressed. Without delay we proceed *medias in res*. The important thing is not the invitation to come to an established church. If those upon whom the pastor is calling belong to the same community as his congregation, such an invitation is in place; but it will be useless unless the pastor convinces them of the need and benefit of going to church; and persons who have never received Christian instruction can seldom be convinced in the course of one or two short calls of that need and benefit. The one essential thing, after all, is to win these lost souls for Christ; and this is done by convincing them of sin and its consequences and by telling them about the Savior, who has redeemed them.

Under no circumstances should the prospect of temporal advantages to be gained by joining the church, such as education and employment for their children or themselves, be held out to people as an inducement to come to church. Jesus never held out the prospect of earthly advantages to induce men to become His followers. On the contrary, He said: "If a man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me," Matt. 16:24. When the Jews were willing to follow Him because they hoped that He would supply their physical wants, He condemned their attitude in severe terms and told them to seek that spiritual Bread which is come from heaven and which endureth unto everlasting life. John 6:26-58. Christ's Church likewise has only spiritual blessings to offer; and it is the business of the Church to promise these blessings only, which are unspeakably greater than all temporal advantages. Moreover, if we try to induce people to come to church by awakening in them the hope of temporal gain, we become guilty of deceiving them and ourselves, and we destroy rather than build the Church of Christ. That some who have been persuaded by the promise of temporal benefits have eventually found the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:46) we do not deny. But these could have been gained for Christ without such a promise; and if the hope of earthly gain had not been held out to people, many would be better Christians than they are, and there would be fewer disappointed Christians and hypocrites in the visible Church. The pastor must seek to win souls for Christ by honestly convincing them of their spiritual need and presenting to them the Redeemer, who alone meets that need. 1 Cor. 2:2.

A Christian congregation should not confine its missionary efforts to its own community, but seek to win souls for Christ in all communities. To this work the same principles apply that apply

to the work of a church in its own town or village. There is but one way in which a sinner (irrespective of his color, race, nationality, country, environment, education, habits, etc.) can be brought to a knowledge of his sins and to faith in Christ, to wit, by the Law and the Gospel; *the methods, however, which are used in winning sinners for Christ may be varied in accordance with the circumstances.* In seeking to win souls for Christ in other communities, a Christian congregation and its pastor may have to adopt methods of approach different from those which they use in doing missionary work in their own locality. They must do so when the work in the other neighborhood presents its own particular outward obstacles and difficulties (religious customs, the caste system, the social status of women, aversion to other communities or to foreigners, etc.).

While the pastor and the members of his congregation will not win souls for Christ even in their own community by merely inviting the people to come to their church, inviting the people of other communities to their church may become a serious obstacle to winning them for Christ. It may become a real obstacle when such people, owing to established custom or to certain wrong ideas on their part or to the fear of persecution by their own community, can only with difficulty, or perhaps not at all, be persuaded to come to that church. In these circumstances inviting them to come to that church would be a wrong missionary method. The Word of God nowhere says that a person must become a member of a certain congregation if he would be a true Christian; the only stipulation that the Word of God makes is that he affiliate with a church (even though it be a church of only two or three members, including himself, Matt. 18:20) where the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution. (See the last paragraph under "Parochial Rights and Restrictions" in Chapter Six of Dr. Fritz's *Pastoral Theology*; compare also Mark 9:38-41; Luke 9:49-50; and Stoeckhardt, *Die Biblische Geschichte des Neuen Testaments*, under Matt. 18:15-35.) The one purpose of all Christian missionary work is to bring souls to Christ. We can never bring souls to Christ by insisting that they must become members of a certain church. When the pastor and his members know that by coming to a certain church (especially by becoming a member of that church and bringing his family with him) one of another community would cause a disturbance in his community (or in the congregation's own community), or when it seems likely that from fear of persecution by his own community or from communal prejudice such a person himself would be disinclined to come to that church, then inviting him to come to that church is certainly not a method suited to winning him for Christ, and the pastor and his members should not use this method.

Similarly it would be a mistake for a pastor or missionary to attempt to call at the homes of another community where the custom denying him and the members of his congregation access

to those homes still prevails. Thereby he would unnecessarily arouse the enmity and opposition of that and other communities against himself, against his congregation, and against the Gospel. This does not mean, however, that the pastor and his congregation should make no attempt to win souls for Christ in such communities. Being sinners, the people there likewise need the salvation procured for them by Christ, and Jesus wants us to do all we can to bring this salvation to them. As sincere Christians the pastor and his members should desire the salvation of these people and pray for them. So much they can do in any case, and such sincere prayers in the name of Jesus will not remain unheard by God. In most cases they can do more. Opportunities to speak to such people about their soul's need without offending against social custom can often be found. The pastor himself will in the course of time gain acquaintances in the other community. Opportunities will present themselves especially to the members of his congregation. 2 Kings 5:2-3. The pastor should therefore take great pains to remind his members of their Christian duty toward such lost souls, to instruct them how they may make use of such opportunities, and frequently to encourage them in their efforts to win such souls for Christ. The members of the congregation will on occasion be asked about their religion; and they should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear," 1 Pet. 3:15.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the pastor and his members, in their efforts to win souls for Christ, must keep clearly in mind that their purpose is just that, namely, to win souls for Christ. They must avoid everything that, far from removing sinful notions about caste and sinful caste pride from the hearts of men, would only arouse their enmity and opposition. They will not win men for Christ by referring to their wrong notions about caste or to their caste pride. Some may even have discarded or never have entertained such wrong notions and themselves condemn caste pride and would be offended by the suggestion that since they outwardly conform to caste custom, they also share the sinful notions and sinful pride often connected with the custom. It would be a wrong method, for instance, if the pastor or his members, on the basis of the story of the Good Samaritan, would address them on the matter of caste. Even if those to whom you are speaking of their own accord condemn caste and its injustices, show no elation; their purpose may be merely to see how you will react, and your elation might indicate to them that, after all, you are more concerned about wiping out caste differences than about winning souls for Christ. Nor should you show resentment if such people undertake to defend caste. Show no interest in the question of caste, but remind them that all men are sinners and need the Redeemer from sin, death, and the power of the devil. Improve the opportunity to remove the apprehension of such

people that it is intended to constrain them to join the church of another community. In short, show by word and action that your only concern is that they shall escape eternal damnation and obtain eternal life by faith in the Savior Jesus Christ. Just that sentiment must dominate any method of approach, and everything that might indicate selfish motives must be avoided.

Christians should seek to win souls for Christ not only by speaking in person to the unchurched about their salvation, but also, and first of all, by the example of their own Christian lives. Matt. 5:13-16; 1 Pet. 2:12. A pastor and his members may be prevented by outward obstacles, not only from inviting people of other communities to their church, but also from speaking to them about their soul's needs either in their homes or at any other place. But a far greater obstacle to winning souls for Christ are the unholy lives of so many who profess to be Christians. Rom. 2:24. (See also 1 Tim. 6:1.) Unless Christians *live* as Christians should, men will not be impressed by what they *say* about the Christian religion. On the other hand, they may without words win people for Christ by the example of their holy lives. 1 Pet. 3:2; 2:12. Such holy living itself makes the Christians lights holding forth the Word of Life. Phil. 2:14-15; Matt. 5:16. Many an unchurched person has been first moved to examine the Christian religion, not so much by the preaching of the Gospel as by what he saw of the effect of the Gospel in the lives of sincere Christians. When encouraging his members to be real missionaries, the pastor should also remind them how important for their success as missionaries it is that they lead truly Christian lives and that therefore his members should, in accord with Matt. 18, help each other to establish and maintain a high standard of Christian living in the congregation.

A congregation should not be hurriedly organized. In some cases it will not be wise even to urge the people to gather publicly for congregational worship. If such public gathering for congregational worship would be likely to arouse opposition in the community, it should not be urged at all before those concerned have attained a fairly good knowledge of the Gospel and by word and action show that they are willing, with the help of the Lord, to take up their cross and to follow Him. Do not even attempt to bring a number of people together for a regular instruction class if this would arouse opposition in the community. Do not expect to reap before you have sown and watered and given the seed time to sprout and bear fruit. You cannot build until you have laid the foundation. Be content with the opportunity to speak again and again about sin and grace to the *individual* rather than do anything that would deprive you of even this opportunity by arousing opposition or causing the individual to stay away from you. It may be unwise even to suggest a formal course of instruction to the individual. Instead, the pastor or missionary, or with his help the member of his congregation, must aim

in his conversations with the individual systematically to increase his knowledge of God's Word and the Gospel of salvation. He should not merely repeat the same things each time, but proceed from one point to another, gradually covering the fundamental doctrines of the Catechism, and doing so without using the book if this should seem advisable until he has in a measure gained the confidence of the individual. In short, in a systematic way the pastor should try, under the Holy Spirit, to lead the individual into all truth. Until this aim has in a measure been attained, such things as Baptism, congregational worship, etc., need not at all be referred to. If the individual himself, realizing that eventually he will be expected to receive Baptism, refers to it, assure him that the decision will rest entirely with him. If he refers to his fear of persecution, do not assure him that he will not have to suffer for the sake of his faith, but warn him not to sell his soul for at best a few years of temporal peace, and assure him on the basis of the Bible that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be ours in the world to come if we remain faithful to the end. Meantime he should cry to God in behalf of such souls and leave it to Him to give the increase.

A. J. LUTZ

### A Call to Evangelism

Our "Each One Reach One" program justly calls upon the laymen in our congregations to recognize their obligation as members of the body of Christ and give of their time and talents to win souls for Christ. This obligation cannot be emphasized too strongly. In an article published by the *Lutheran Standard* (July 30, 1947) Thomas W. Wersell, assistant regional director, Minnesota-Red River Valley area, stresses the part the layman must play in the work of the Church by saying: "A new awareness of the church's duty to evangelize through the use of her lay members is also manifesting itself in American Lutheranism. Various Lutheran bodies are promoting individual programs for enrolling the laity in the work of witnessing. The American Lutheran Church carries on its emphasis through its Committee on Evangelism. The United Lutheran Church's Board of Social Missions is actively engaged in fostering evangelism in that body. The Evangelical Lutheran Church has made 1947 the "Year of Evangelism" in a church-wide effort to use laymen for witness work. The Augustana Synod's Board of Home Missions is charged with the responsibility of carrying forward a Parish Evangelism Program that perpetually seeks to enlist the congregations in a program of soul-winning.

"A new day for American Lutheranism may be dawning with this renewed stress of employing church members in the work of harvesting a huge and heavy field of souls that is already white and waiting. This day *must* dawn! It *must* come! Every believer in Christ *must* be used to tell others the Glad Tidings of great

joy! Church members *must* be enlisted for soul-winning! The making of disciples *must* become the burden of the church's life, else the tares will be more thickly sown by the adversary and will eventually choke out the wheat. Then not only will the white harvest be lost, but the church will tragically learn what Jesus meant when He said, 'Because thou art lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of My mouth.' Christ is confronting His church today with the divine dictum to **EVANGELIZE OR DIE!**

"What the cause is for the failure to challenge laymen to fulfill their holy calling to be witnesses is not for us to say. But this can be said with emphatic boldness to pastors and lay leaders: Use the lay members! Give them tasks! Send them out, informed and equipped, into the harvest! Tell them of Christ's call to every believer to 'be My witness.' Then help them to be His witnesses and to fulfill their calling!"

A. W. C. G.

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## Theological Observer

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**The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.** — Under this heading, the *Lutheran Outlook* (September, 1947), writing editorially, says that this name is symbolical of the fact that "not much change has taken place. And that is representative of Missouri," or as the last sentence of the editorial puts it: "The one hundredth birthday of our sister synod finds her rather 'sot in her ways.'" Before that the editorial states that "the centennial convention of the Synod meeting at Chicago in July *rescinded* (*italics ours*) the resolution of 1938 by which it had virtually agreed that sufficient basis existed for doctrinal unity with the American Lutheran Church." There are other expressions in the editorial that might be challenged, but we shall confine our remarks to these two. In the first place, as to the statement that the Missouri Synod is rather "sot in her ways." Let us say with emphasis that the situation in Missouri is certainly not what these words indicate. There was at the convention at Chicago a definite and earnest desire for church union, as the various resolutions of the convention show. But that union, as Missouri has always held, must be based upon real unity of doctrine. There must be agreement of belief and profession before there can be outward organization. This is not a new, but a very old principle and one that makes sense. Such unity is divinely required, and the Missouri Synod will do all it can that this unity may be obtained. Whatever it may cost to reach this goal, Missouri is willing to pay the price. Such was the sentiment prevailing at the Centennial Convention. It was a convention of honest confession, but also one of earnest desire to heal the breach in Lutheranism in America. In the second place, let it be firmly and emphatically said that the resolutions of 1938 were *not* rescinded by the Chicago convention. The resolutions of 1938 served a good purpose. They were honestly drawn up and presented in good faith as a basis for church union. But since they were unacceptable to Lutherans both in the Missouri Synod and without, it seemed best to declare that they should no longer serve as a basis for union. Just as the Marburg Articles, the Schwabach Articles, and the Torgau Articles, which led up to the Augsburg Confession, were never rescinded, but were rather embodied in the Augustana, so also the resolutions of 1938 have not been rescinded, for there may still be an Augustana for the Lutheran Church in America which may prove itself acceptable. At least such is the hope of the Missouri Synod at this time. By all means let us get together. But let us do it in the right old Lutheran way.

J. T. M.

**We Honor the Missouri Synod.** — Under this heading the *Australian Lutheran* (July 16, 1947) publishes the following jubilee greeting on the occasion of our Church's Centennial, which we here note as an expression of the cordial relations existing between

the two synods: "The year 1947 marks the centenary of the establishment of 'The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.' She is our sister — not the elder, but the big sister of 'The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia.' She has done us much good in many ways. We owe her high honor and deep gratitude. We bless her with the ancient benediction: 'Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions!' There was organized on April 26, 1847, in St. Paul's Church, Chicago, 'The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.' The 'Missouri Synod,' as this organization is now commonly called, did not come into being in the State of Missouri, but in the State of Illinois. Of the twelve charter congregations Missouri furnished only one. But, we are told, 'the conservative and strict adherence to Lutheran doctrine and practices of the Lutherans settled in Missouri caused the body to be called *Missouri Lutherans*.' We honor 'Missouri' and are grateful to her for what she has done and is still doing for us. She has sent us outstanding men who faithfully served our Church in Australia as pastors, professors, presidents, and missionaries. She has sent us representatives who helped to overcome our difficulties and strengthened, encouraged, and advised us in our labors. She has sent us valuable literature, which forms the marrow of our theological libraries and has been used with untold blessings by our Church in its congregations, schools, and homes. She has given us the glorious 'Lutheran Hour.' For these and other favors — next to God — we thank Missouri. We wish her well. God bless the Missouri Synod!" — The periodical *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt*, published by our brethren in Porto Alegre, Brazil, shares in our Centennial celebration by dedicating almost entire issues to our founding fathers. A previous number offered a lengthy description of Dr. Walther's life and work. The last issue to reach our desk is dedicated to Rev. F. Wyneken. One of the articles closes with the words: "His childlike, firm faith, joined with a dynamic energy, as also his exalted reverence for his sacred office, coupled with deep personal modesty, render Wyneken a real example to us. We do not wish to deify men, especially not the one whose last official declaration, which has come down to us from him, reads: 'By no means any deification of men and no worship of living or dead saints in the Lutheran Church!' But when we thank the Lord, our God, for that which He has done for us through our fathers, we certainly desire to remember also the blessing which God bestowed upon us through Konrad Friedrich Dietrich Wyneken."

J. T. M.

**Is the Christian Day School Practicable?** — There seems to be much interest in Christian day schools in Lutheran churches in our country, as a number of articles, published of late in various Lutheran periodicals, show. We here quote a few paragraphs of a fine brief for the Christian day school, offered in the *Lutheran Standard* (Sept. 27, 1947). We read (quoting in part): "Although

the Missouri Synod has many Sunday schools, it staunchly advocates the establishment and retention of parochial schools. Within the past century the Missouri Synod has grown from a group of about 4,000 to more than a million members. It would be futile to deny that they owe their growth to a large degree to their schools, because through their schools they have trained loyal members. We have good reason to believe that a considerable number of children of non-Lutheran parents are enrolled in the schools of the Missouri Synod, since they claim to do a good deal of missionary work among the unchurched in this way. At a recent convention of teachers of the American Lutheran Church, a member of the Board of Parish Education suggested that it be shown how religion could be correlated with the common school subjects. He remarked that the study of the Bible, Luther's Catechism, and Bible History occupy perhaps an hour or a little more each day, the remainder of the time being devoted to the common school subjects. He wanted to know if we could justify maintaining a Christian day school for only an hour or so of religion each day. Here is the answer? All teaching in the Christian day school is and should be 'Christ-centered.' And why cannot Christian principles be brought to bear upon every subject in the school? In the common school subjects it is the duty of every Lutheran teacher to keep Christ before the pupil. A Christian atmosphere must prevail even during the recreation time. Discipline must be in accord with Christian principles that the child has learned. Just as we employ arithmetic, geography, history, English, and other subjects in teaching religion, so we can combine religion with the regular lessons in spelling by making up lists of words from Bible History lessons studied. Occasionally lessons in American history afford opportunity to correct some impressions as to when Lutherans first arrived in the New World. Lessons in English can be based on activities related to the Church, Christian day school, or the Christian home. In elementary science, hygiene, and geography the teacher has equal opportunities to show how God is glorified in His handiwork. In teaching handwriting, practice words and sentences can be taken from the Scriptures. In drawing or painting, the Christian teachers will show how the great masters, such as da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian, and Hofmann, were inspired by religious subjects. A Christian attitude in the common school subjects is nearly as important as studies in religion. If one does not apply one's religion to everyday affairs, his spiritual development cannot go far. Since the aim of the Christian day school is not merely to teach religious subjects, but to build and develop Christian character, these schools are of great importance to our American Lutheran Church. Does the local church and the Church as a whole benefit from its Christian schools? Certainly, for just as the Church needs an educated clergy, so it needs an enlightened Christian laity." J. T. M.

**Missions Shrink with Empires.**—Such is the opinion of a writer in the *Christian Century* (Sept. 24, 1947), who says: "Western Christians may find some satisfaction in the current decline of old-style imperialism. In India and Egypt, in Indonesia and Vietnam, indications multiply that the day of empires is nearing its close. But Christians must temper this happy thought with the stern realization that imperialism, with all its evils, provided Christianity with some of its greatest missionary opportunities. They must remember that nationalist movements among former subject people include a revived loyalty to the religions of those countries. They must understand that, in colonial areas, the term 'Christian' applies to the arrogant colonel as well as to the mission doctor. As the remote outposts of empires are pushed back, Christendom faces a serious possibility of recession from her farthest advances." By way of illustration he writes a paragraph bearing the subtitle "Cross Retreating Before Crescent": "At one time there were approximately five million Copts in Egypt. Today they number not more than one-fifth that figure, and, given the present situation, it is not unreasonable to assume that in time this ancient Christian community will become extinct. Egypt then will become analogous to most of North Africa, where there is no trace of the once flourishing Christian communities which vied with Rome for control of all Christendom. The significance of this disappearance of original Christian groups is deeper than appears on the surface. Evangelical missionaries in Egypt long ago found that the greatest possibilities for constructive work lay among the Copts, not the Moslems. The most effective evangelism has been carried out among the Copts. The greatest educational and social service has been achieved in communities where Coptic influence is strongest. The largest number of converts to the Egyptian Evangelical Church are former Copts. If this community dies, the possibility for effective missionary activity in Egypt will be seriously diminished." In a paragraph under the heading "Moslem Ideas Only" the writer says: "Foreign Christian groups also have been feeling pressure recently. Some Arabic newspapers learned that French Catholic schools were using textbooks containing statements which attacked Islam. This led to a short-lived cry that all foreign schools be taken over by the Egyptian government. It was proposed that no textbooks be permitted for use which made statements uncomplimentary to Islam. The Christian editor of the Arabic edition of the *Reader's Digest*, Fuad Sarruf, recently received a note threatening the blowing up of his premises if he did not embrace Islam. The note also demanded that he use his magazine to promote Moslem ideas. Such incidents illustrate the temper of Egypt as the imperialists are moved out. Whatever the ultimate outcome, one fact stands out clearly: Christian missionary activity in Egypt will be curtailed in some degree. With the rise of nationalism, missions must take a setback." No one, of course, can tell with certainty what the future has in store for Christian

mission work in pagan countries. But the very crisis of the present day is a challenge to the Christian Church to do with all its might what it can to carry out the Savior's great commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. Eventually our Lord's prophecy in Matt. 24:14 will be fulfilled. J. T. M.

**Crusade for a United Church.** — E. Stanley Jones is touring the country, speaking in thirty cities during thirty days, in the interest of a union of all churches. His basic premise is: "A world seeking unity, knowing that it must find it or perish, will pay only a marginal heed to a Church unwilling or unable to show the way to unity. The next great step for the churches is to face the world — united. A divided Church in a divided world lacks moral authority." Dr. Jones hopes "so to saturate the soul of the Church with a demand for unity that this saturation will be precipitated into action." He believes that his plan to unite the churches in a federal union is the most feasible among the various plans thus far advocated. In America, for example, 256 respective denominations would be asked to unite and to form the Church of Christ in America. None of the denominations, however, would lose their identity, since each would constitute a branch within this Church of Christ. As each State in our Union may have its specific laws and each local community its own form of government under the Federal Constitution, so also each denomination may retain its particular doctrine, its distinctive characteristics or church government under and within the framework of the United Church of Christ in America. However, no denomination dare claim to have all the truth nor denounce the particular distinctive points of any other denomination. In the Church of Christ in America we would find represented the highest form of ritualism and the most liberal view of the "inner light." In short, the Church of Christ in America would be characterized by "unified diversity."

As the genius of each race or country is expressed in the particular civilization or form of government, so also the various churches throughout the world express varying concepts of Christ. According to Jones these various views must now be brought together in the Church of Christ of the World, so that a united Church could speak with authority to a disunited world. The doctrinal basis for this proposed Church of Christ will be Matt. 16:18: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church." Under Jones' federal union plan every branch in the Church of Christ of the World must be free to interpret this basic confession, the conservatives according to historic orthodoxy and the liberals according to their viewpoint. Thus each Church is to retain its autonomy and yet unite with all others in a grand unionistic scheme.

Stanley Jones, in common with so many unionists, makes much over the division of denominations in America into 256 groups



listed in the Census Report. The Census Report, however, lists individually all bodies which are separately organized though they are in confessional agreement. For example, the Baptists are listed with nineteen different bodies, the Methodists with almost twenty, and the Lutherans with over twenty. The fact of the matter is that outside of the numerous but numerically insignificant sects there are in America only a half dozen separate denominational families.—It is, of course, evident that Stanley Jones and the people behind his "Crusade for a United Church" have forgotten entirely the earnest warning of the Savior against false doctrine. God indeed wants a united Church, not, however, on any kind of humanly devised platform nor for human ends, but a Church which is united in humble submission and strict adherence to His Word. Jones apparently has never heard that the genius of at least one of the churches is its confessionalism. The Lutheran Church, for example, would be compelled to deny its very autonomy—the thing Jones wishes to preserve—by joining his visionary Church of Christ in America. F. E. M.

**To Clergymen Only—an Appeal from a Layman.**—Simple things are often important things, and when weary, distressed laymen rise to speak a word of warning to the clergy, their plea certainly deserves a hearing. In the *Living Church* a very intelligent layman pleads with the ministers of his fold to conduct themselves in such a way that people will remain in the Church and not drift away. His article mentions such simple, self-evident things as: "Diction should be clear and distinct"; "Pronunciation should be clear"; "Enunciation should not be hurried, and yet not unduly slow and hesitating"; "Do not use unusual gestures"; "Do not read long notices. If necessary, print them, but do not cut the beautiful Episcopal service twenty minutes short and then read notices with running commentary for half an hour. It is very tiresome to the congregation. Never give forgotten notices, no matter how important, from behind the altar rail, nor after the Holy Eucharist has been started," but also such more important matters as these: "Sermons should be complete in fourteen minutes or less, except in rare instances by exceptional men. At any rate, that is about as long as the congregation will ordinarily listen intelligently. State the purpose, argument, discussion, and conclusion as simply as possible. Clear, straightforward, simple statements carefully expressed carry much more meaning than long, rambling, complicated statements full of repetition. Do not let the course of the sermon wander off into all the by-ways and side lanes far afield. Hold to definite direction. You can gain objectives more clearly. A sermon should be finished once, not several times"; and "Do not emphasize too many points in one sermon. This causes the sermon to lose its meaning and confuses the listeners more than otherwise. Do not shout. Not over one shout to a sermon, and usually better not that." He closes



his petition with the words: "These notes are submitted with the hope that steps toward improvement of sermons and services may be taken promptly. More intelligent critics than I are needed for their constructive solution. It is hoped that every clergyman will not conclude that these comments apply to all others than himself." One might disagree with some of the criticisms of the writer. We personally find that we can listen intelligently to the average sermon for more than fourteen minutes. A period of twenty-five minutes is, in general opinion, a satisfactory length. But it seems to us that the good layman, raising his weary voice in the Episcopal Church, has a seasonable word to say also to ministers in the Lutheran Church.

J. T. M.

**The "Two-by-Two's."** — A few years ago Dr. F. E. Mayer published a brief article in the "Theological Observer" on this rather new sect, which is known also as "The Disciples of the Lord." A brother in one of our Western States, in whose large mission parish these enthusiasts are causing considerable havoc, gives us the following brief, but helpful description of their teachings and practices: "The sect claims to use only the Bible, lashes out against Luther's Small Catechism, Christian tracts, the publishing of religious books, the paying of salaries to pastors, the erecting of churches, and men attending seminaries to learn Hebrew and Greek and listening there to human, man-made interpretations. They claim that they have the Bible and that the Holy Spirit gives them the right understanding of it so that they do not have to attend a seminary and learn from others. It is wrong, according to this sect, to admonish the members of a congregation to give money to the church, and they teach that the Widow's Two Mites must be taken in a spiritual sense, not literally. Ministers should live as Jesus did and the disciples. There must be no infant baptism, for a person must first believe, and then he is fit to be baptized; in other words, a person to be baptized must first be taught. Ministers must not be married, but must go out two-by-two as the Lord sent out the seventy disciples. Christians are permitted to meet only in homes; they are not allowed to build churches and meet in them. Sunday schools are definitely forbidden; the parents have the duty of training their children at home. The sect claims to do only what the Bible commands. The Lord's Supper, as this sect maintains, is merely a memorial feast. Lutheran hymns are too difficult for children to understand, as they claim. There must be no definite order of service. The sect believes in 'testimonies,' and everyone must give a 'testimony' at each meeting. The sect also demands humility of its members." The errors taught by the sect are easily refuted; nevertheless, among people not grounded in the Word of God it may cause much confusion. The humility which the sect demands is certainly not the true humility which our Lord asks of His followers, for their teachings as well as their practices manifest a good ideal of spiritual arrogance. J. T. M.

**Items from Religious News Service.**—Merger of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan denominations by 1951 is visualized in a report submitted at Winona Lake, Indiana, by Bishop L. B. Marston of the Free Methodist Church.

First issue of *Presbyterian Life*, a new thirty-two-page weekly magazine sponsored by the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., will be published about January 1, 1948.

Use of public funds for operation and maintenance of Roman Catholic schools was declared at the National Education Association convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, to be a question for settlement by the United States Supreme Court.

Pastors and laymen from all parts of Italy gathered at Torre Pellice, in the Waldensian Valley, for the opening of the annual synod of the Waldensian Church, regarded as a major yearly event in Italian Protestantism.

The American section of the Lutheran World Federation has allocated \$44,690 to purchase printing equipment for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, which is planning shortly to resume publication of religious literature.

A \$250,000 project to publish the "Complete Commentaries of John Calvin" as originally undertaken in forty-eight volumes of the Calvin Translation Society of Edinburgh, Scotland, was announced by a local publishing house in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis will sponsor a seminar in New York City this fall "specifically oriented to the specialized needs of the clergy." Conducted by Dr. Paul Lussheimer, the seminar will consist of five sessions under the general title: "How the Clergy Can Use the Techniques of Modern Psychotherapy."

*Morning Star VI*, a schooner outfitted by the American Board of Foreign Missions, set sail from Boston under Skipper Price Louis, Jr., for the Micronesian Islands in the South Seas after elaborate services of dedication and Godspeed. The tiny craft will serve Congregational missionary workers among the Marshall and Caroline Islands.

Russian Baptist leaders voluntarily agreed not to attend the Baptist World Congress in Copenhagen because they object to the "political nature" of the Congress program. The Russian Baptists explained that one of the Congress topics—Communism as a Barrier to Christianity—would embarrass their government.

The Indian government has decided to halt all official grants for the upkeep of churches on March 31, 1948. This action, it was indicated in Calcutta by the Most Rev. George Clay Hubback,

Metropolitan of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon, will force dioceses to use their own funds for payment of clerical salaries and for the upkeep of churches.

Plans are being made to have the hymn "Abide with Me" sung in every Protestant church in Britain on November 16, when the centenary of its writing will be commemorated. An "Abide with Me Centenary" committee has been formed, and the story of the hymn, which was written by Henry S. Lyte, is being prepared for publication in the press.

Catholics from seven countries — The United States, France, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Ireland, and England — commemorated the 25th anniversary of the conversion of the late G. K. Chesterton to Catholicism by gathering in the studio of his old home at Beaconsfield. The house is to be used by the Converts' Aid Society as a temporary home for convert clergy and their families and former Anglican nuns.

One hundred Mennonites from the United States and various European countries took part in a two-day international Spiritual Life Conference at Basel, Switzerland, which opened on August 16th. Reports were presented on Mennonite churches in the United States, Canada, Holland, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, and on the Waldensian Church in Italy.

The World Council of Churches now comprises 116 communions in 36 countries, it was announced in New York by Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, associate secretary. He said 23 communions in 15 countries had joined the Council in the last six months, including six Orthodox groups, the United Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

By a vote of 281 to 23 the general synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church approved the basis of union with the Congregational-Christian Church. The basis, a twenty-four-page document containing articles of agreement between the Churches, has gone to the thirty-four synods for action. It must be accepted by two-thirds of them to become effective.

The Forty-Eighth Convention of the Canadian Gideons meeting in Toronto reported that the Gideons are now placing Bibles in planes. According to announcement, Eddie Rickenbacker, president of Eastern Airlines, has asked that Bibles be put on all planes of his company in racks that he has provided for them. Arrangements have also been made to furnish Pan-American Airlines with Bibles.

Establishment of chairs of Christian history and of theology at the Imperial University was urged at Tokyo by Dr. Shigeru Nambara, Christian president of the university. He declared that

Japanese endowment of the proposed departments is "impossible" but said he hoped that means will be provided by American Christians.

The speakers at the national convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Los Angeles reported "conspicuous success" in a post-war campaign to spread the sect's teachings in traditionally Roman Catholic lands in Latin America. Before the war, it was said, the number of Witnesses in all of Latin America totaled only 505 individuals. Today the total was placed at 5,000 in Mexico alone and 10,000 in other Latin lands.

Independent India will welcome Christian missionaries if they "come as the servants of the people and not as spiritual overlords," Dr. E. Stanley Jones, author and missionary to India for 40 years, told the World Convention of Churches of Christ (Disciples) meeting in Buffalo, New York. Dr. Jones said he does not share the fear of many that "Indian Christians will be persecuted in an independent India and that Christian missions will not be tolerated. In local situations through local officials this may happen, but it will not be the policy of the center."

At the present time there are more than 1,500 canonized saints in the Roman Catholic Church, according to Vatican authorities. It was pointed out that this means there is nearly one saint for every year since the death of Christ and more than four for every day in the yearly calendar. It is expected that this list will be swelled during the Holy Year of 1950, when fifty canonizations and beatifications are expected to take place.

Seventh Day Adventists claim to have invested more than \$200,000,000, almost one half of their total receipts, in foreign missions within the last seventy-five years. In 1946, 370 missionaries were sent to stations in various parts of the world. Adventists work in more than 800 languages and dialects, and print literature in 185 languages.

Dr. Walter Barlow and Dr. Price H. Gwynn, both of Philadelphia, have been named by the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. to conduct special ministers' training schools throughout the Presbyterian Church during next fall and winter. The schools, planned for every minister in the church, will take the form of teachers' training courses at which the pastors will be taught how to teach evangelism techniques to lay workers. Each school will last from two to four days.

Accommodations at Louisville Baptist High School were filled and overflowing when the institution opened its doors for the first time September 8th. The Rev. Oscar Gibson, pastor of the Eighteenth Street Baptist Church and chairman of the Baptist School Board, said that plans had been made for only sixty-five students and more than forty applications were received the first

week after announcement of plans. Gibson declared, "I had no idea the school would be in such demand. Our full quota will be exceeded this first year."

Judge John E. Swift of the Massachusetts Superior Court told the sixty-fifth annual convention of the Knights of Columbus in Boston that an "anti-God campaign" was started in American schools by John Dewey when he was a professor at Columbia University. Judge Swift charged that Dewey and his associates have, in the past forty years, "converted the whole public school system of the United States into a powerful propaganda machine to indoctrinate the teachers and the school children of America with his theory that there is no such thing as a personal creator."

Launching of the Catholic Broadcaster Association, a new group which aims to aid Catholic organizations in attaining more effective use of radio, was announced at a conference scheduled at Fordham University on August 15-17. According to Wm. A. Coleman, chairman of the radio division of Fordham's Department of Commercial Arts, C. B. A. will embrace four major membership classifications: local Catholic groups, national groups, the clergy and prominent individual Catholics, and Catholic educational organizations. The Association will have a central script library and will provide facilities for the exchange of information helpful in the preparation of Catholic programs.

The new Lincoln collection reveals that Lincoln consistently was opposed to any official interference in the affairs of the churches by the state. When a minister who had refused to declare himself for the Union was arrested in St. Louis, Missouri, Lincoln personally interviewed the pastor and instructed General Samuel R. Curtis as follows: "I must add that the United States government must not, as by this order, undertake to run the church; when an individual in a church, or out of it, becomes dangerous to the public interest, he must be checked; but let the churches as such take care of themselves. It will not do for the United States to support or to appoint Trustees, supervisors, or other agents of the churches."

Reversal of court decisions which permit the use of public tax funds for religious work and recall of Myron C. Taylor as the President's personal representative to the Vatican were urged by the Convention of the Disciples of Christ meeting in Buffalo, New York. The Convention called upon "all patriotic citizens to resist every attempt to further widen the breach in the law of the separation of Church and State" and to work for the repeal of any state law "which sanctions grants of public money for the support of religious bodies or to activities supported by such religious bodies."

The annual home missions conference of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern) was told in Montreat, North



Carolina, by Dr. James L. Fowle, that "the urgency for home mission enterprise felt during World War II is intensified now." Mr. Fowle cited as evidence the fact that in Texas alone 3,500,000 people are not in any church, while one county in West Virginia has reported that less than ten per cent are church members. "There is an urgency in home missions today," he declared, "and we must get into action now."

Touro Synagogue, oldest in the United States, was formally dedicated as a national shrine before an overflow crowd of 1,200 in Newport, Rhode Island. Principal speaker at the 3-day ceremony marking the dedication of the 184-year-old Jewish house of worship was Joseph W. Martin, Jr., speaker of the United States House of Representatives. The beautiful old building, where George Washington delivered his famous speech embodying his concept of religious liberty, was described by Congressman Martin as having seen "the ebb and flow of American history."

The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., in co-operation with Msgr. Flanagan's Boys Town, located near Omaha, Nebraska, will offer a two-year graduate training program leading to a Master's Degree in "boy counseling." The purpose of the program is to train men to act as counselors in boys' institutions and in other agencies dealing with adolescents, supplying a broad grounding in Catholic social principles, and practical training in individual guidance and recreational leadership at Boys Town. The program will include four semesters of graduate work. Of these, the first and fourth will be spent at Catholic University in Washington, D. C., while the second and third will be at Boys Town.

A colony site, founded by Europeans for religious liberty, celebrated its 100th anniversary in the village of Wartburg, Tennessee, August 16-17. St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Wartburg (Missouri Synod) was the center of the program which drew Lutherans from afar. The history of Wartburg and St. Paul's Lutheran Church is intimately related to the purchase of five sailing vessels by a company in Antwerp, Belgium. The Rev. R. B. Faerber, present pastor, said the ships were originally intended for cargo vessels but were converted to passenger use by the "colonization company" formed by George T. Gerding, Augustus Guenther, and Otto Kimbush. This company, organized in 1845, purchased thousands of acres in east Tennessee, and efforts were made to induce Swiss and German people to settle in the rugged area.

More than 750 Protestant clergymen, representing many denominations, will support the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts when it seeks the signatures of 20,000 registered voters this fall on a petition it will place before the State Legislature to change the present law prohibiting physicians from giv-



ing birth prevention information. The Massachusetts Council of Churches and the Greater Boston Rabbinical Association have given their official endorsement to the League's efforts to place once again before the Legislature the question of allowing physicians to dispense contraceptive advice. The Planned Parenthood League makes no use this year of the phrase "birth control" but calls the proposed new law "An act to allow physicians to provide medical contraceptive care to married women for the protection of life or health."

Thirty young European theological graduates have sailed from Le Havre, France, for the United States where they will study at American seminaries under a scholarship project initiated through the Reconstruction Department of the World Council of Churches in Geneva. Selected by interdenominational reconstruction committees in nine countries, the young theologians were given free transportation by Church World Service at New York, and their educational expenses will be met by the thirteen seminaries where they will pursue courses in the fall. The seminaries which will receive the students include Princeton, Yale, Chicago Theological, Chicago Lutheran, Eden (St. Louis), Hamma (Springfield, Ohio), Union (New York), Union (Richmond, Virginia), McCormick (Chicago), Drew (Madison, New Jersey), Pacific School of Religion, Louisville Seminary, and Austin Seminary (Texas). Most of the students belong to Reformed, Lutheran, and other predominant denominations in Europe. The countries they represent are Hungary, France, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Switzerland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, and England.

A recent amendment by the Madras government to two educational rules governing religious instruction in schools and colleges continues to be opposed by Christians in South India, chiefly because they fear it is the thin end of a wedge for further restrictions in the future. The disputed amendment reads as follows: "Religious instruction may not be given in schools and colleges under private management subject to the following conditions: (I.) If instruction is in a faith other than that to which a pupil belongs, he or she will be exempted from attending it if a parent or guardian requests in writing such exemption, which shall be in force until the request is withdrawn; (II.) religious instruction given shall not attack any other religion; (III.) staff buildings for pupils of any schools or colleges shall not be used for proselytism." As the new rule does not define the term "proselytism," responsible Christian educational agencies fear it may give rise to fabulous complaints against denominational schools on the ground of proselytism."

A. C. W. GUEBERT

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## Book Review

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All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

**An Outline of Biblical Theology.** By Millar Burrows. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press. 1946. 380 pages. \$3.50.

Professor Burrows, distinguished Biblical archaeologist and president of the American Schools of Oriental Research, teaches Biblical theology in the Divinity School at Yale University. His book is not intended to be, as he himself indicates, "a complete, logically articulated system of doctrine derived from the Bible" (p. 4). It is rather an attempt to present what the author believes to be the most important topics dealt with in the Bible, "each considered in its chronological development and with reference to the historical background" (p. 6). These topics, each of which is discussed under subheads, are: authority and revelation; God; Christ; the universe; man; the people of God; the divine requirement; sin; judgment and salvation; eschatology and the future life; the way to salvation; the Christian life; special offices and functions; public worship; Christian service; moral and social ideals. In the conclusion the author discusses the nature of Biblical religion. The book includes a brief bibliography, an index of Scriptural references (29 pages, 3 columns to a page), and an index of names and subjects. The volume is the outgrowth of the author's classroom experience.

The book is in many respects an amazing piece of work. The author has packed into 328 pages an astonishing mass of archaeological, historical, and exegetical findings which even the trained theologian cannot read hurriedly but which require careful study and detailed critical evaluation. This reviewer cannot possibly call attention to all the merits and disadvantages of the book: I shall, however, quote a number of statements which I trust will indicate the general temper of Professor Burrows' erudite mind.

One is happy to note such statements as these: "For Christian faith the focus and principle of unity appears in Christ, who is himself the Word made flesh, the Truth, and the Life. With full recognition of the differences within the Bible, biblical theology may, therefore, judge everything by its relation to the truth as it is in him" (p. 5). "To the much discussed question whether justification means imputed or imparted righteousness the answer is that it means the former" (p. 181). "Nowhere in the New Testament is there anything approaching the idea of transubstantiation or the repeated sacrifice of the mass" (p. 271). "There is thus no question that the first responsibility of the church toward the rest of the world is evangelism, including what is now called foreign missions" (p. 283). "Jesus . . . was not a social reformer or revolutionist. The use of his idea of the kingdom of God by exponents of the social gospel is now known to be based on false exegesis . . . and the kingdom is not a Christianized social order to be progressively achieved on earth. . . . The New Testament records no effort or concern for social reform, to say nothing of revolution" (p. 284). "No pattern for the organization of a Christian state can be derived from the Bible. The efforts of the Puritans to use the laws of Moses as a model for the con-

stitution of a modern state undoubtedly contributed much of permanent value to American law and government, but they were vitiated by the fundamental fallacy of any legalistic use of the Bible" (p. 306).

On the other hand, there are many statements in this book which the Biblical theologian must disavow. The author has, to put it mildly, strange views regarding Inspiration and rejects the inerrancy of Scripture. He says: "That which is divinely inspired must be true, and anything that is not true cannot be divinely inspired. Yet the Bible is full of things that to intelligent, educated persons of today are either quite incredible or at best highly questionable. . . . The historical narratives are full of difficulties and even contradictions" (p. 9). "Some of them [the Apocrypha] are actually as valuable and as truly inspired as some of the books that were retained, or more so" (p. 19). "Comparison of parallel passages should be enough of itself to show the impossibility of maintaining a theory of verbal inspiration" (p. 24). "By and large it is not the wording of the final record but the original vision of the prophets, the wisdom of the sages and lawgivers and apostles, the insight of the historians and evangelists, and the clear insight of Jesus into the mind of God that should be attributed to inspiration. Not the books, not the words, but the men were inspired. It is in this sense that the Scriptures were inspired by God" (p. 25). "Much ink has been wasted also, and is still wasted, in the effort to prove the detailed historical accuracy of the biblical narratives. Actually they abound in errors, including many contradictory statements" (p. 44). "There is thus no escaping the necessity of 'picking and choosing' in our use of the Bible" (p. 49).

Other statements with which a believer in the very words of Scripture cannot agree are: "The 'Trinitarian formula' of Matt. 28:19 f. is not authentic" (p. 80). "The flood story is not history but myth" (p. 118). "The idea of total depravity, in the sense of such a complete corruption of human nature that no man can either will or do what is right without redemption by divine grace, is thus unsupported by the Bible" (p. 170).

And so one could go on and on and on in quoting statements which are at variance with Scriptural teaching. May I call attention to just one more statement which characterizes the thinking of the author. He says: "The language of the Bible . . . must be understood as poetry, not as factual description or analysis" (p. 62). If this were true and applied generally to all statements in Scripture, it would certainly be impossible for Christians to agree even on the simplest summary of Biblical teaching. And that is, we fear, the chief fault of this learned volume. Ministerial students trained in this kind of Biblical theology will, unless the Holy Spirit Himself through the Word teaches them otherwise, adopt an entirely relativistic view regarding divine truth and will present to their parishioners as divine truth only what they themselves have "picked and chosen." Though the author, like so many disciples of neo-orthodoxy, frequently manifests a far higher regard for Scripture than modern Liberalism, he nevertheless allows one to adopt or reject what even Scripture says purely on the basis of one's own religious experience. In other words, the ghost of nineteenth century rationalism has not been laid. It is plainly and painfully perceptible in the pages of this otherwise brilliant volume.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

**A Century of Grace.** Missouri Synod 1847—1947. By Walter A. Baepler. Centennial Series. Concordia Publishing House. 408 pages. Illustrated. Indexed. \$1.50.

This is one of the volumes produced under the auspices of the Centennial Committee which was commissioned to provide the literature essential to an intelligent observance of the Synodical Centennial by our people. As an undertaking such as this volume represents is in itself a *magnum opus* under ordinary circumstances, it stands to reason that when prepared to meet a deadline, certain weaknesses would result. The author was conscious of this and in his preface asks the reader's indulgence because "some sections . . . have become more statistical than was originally planned." Undoubtedly he will endeavor to make improvements in subsequent editions of his history of our Synod.

The volume gives abundant evidence of the fact that the author has delved into many of the primary sources of our history, and his quotations from these are well chosen. The circumstance that a hundred years of history had to be condensed into one volume made it inevitable that large parts of the book are too heavily weighted with names and dates.

At times, in the characterization of the Lutheran synods in existence in 1847, generalizations are made that should be modified. For instance, the statement that at that time the leaders of the General Synod "were avowed enemies of the Lutheran Confessions," etc. This may have been true of a few leaders, but certainly not of the majority; otherwise the "Definite Platform" would not have been rejected so overwhelmingly in 1855. Again, it is going too far to say that the Pennsylvania Ministerium shared the General Synod's "nonconfessional position and affiliated with it in 1853." The Pennsylvania Ministerium was growing progressively more confessional at the time, and its membership in the General Synod in 1853 was with definite reservations which looked for improvement in the general body's attitude toward the Lutheran Confessions. Whatever justified criticism we may make of the General Synod in the days of the fathers, the fact must not be overlooked that the organization of that body in 1820, in a time of general Lutheran disintegration in America, was a very real blessing, which the passing of time only emphasizes. This is said with due appreciation of the weaknesses inherent in the General Synod.

Another of the items that require correction is that of the beginning of the *Lutheran Witness* (p. 196). This periodical was started by the Cleveland Conference during the controversy with the Ohio Synod on Predestination and Election for the purpose of defending our Synod's position in the English language. When, in the opinion of the conference, this purpose had been served, it was resolved to discontinue the publication. It was then that C. A. Frank decided to continue the paper himself for the purpose of giving English readers in and outside our circles an orthodox Lutheran periodical.

In connection with the discussion of the Doctrinal Affirmation (p. 332) it is unfortunate that more recent developments were not added. It could have been done while the book was being made up.

It might be well to include the Constitution of Synod (not

By-Laws) in the Appendix in later editions. This would show the uninitiated reader that the Missouri Synod's doctrinal stand is on the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, and would clearly indicate that the Brief Statement, which is printed out in full, is not one of the Symbols of our Church.

The Atlantic District (p. 365) did not "branch off" from the Eastern District. On p. 112 it would be more exact to say: "The first congregation of the Missouri Synod in Virginia," etc., not "the oldest."

It would be well for the author to check carefully his conclusions on the Missouri-Iowa Colloquy of 1867 with the Davenport Theses and the Toledo Theses; also, p. 207, the definite statement that "the Missouri Synod has *ever since* avoided," etc.

Other more minor errata will no doubt be corrected in due time.

As to the print and make-up of the book, in general, these are good. However, at times, smaller type might have been used to advantage to set off purely statistical matter from the running story, e. g., p. 168, pp. 217—218, the listing of the District Synods; Ernst's letter to Walther, pp. 85—87, etc. When cuts of individuals are used, they ought to be uniform in size, especially when placed side by side or on pages that face each other; and cuts should not be crowded on one page when there is plenty of room on the preceding and following pages: e. g., p. 38; pp. 174—175; p. 219; pp. 234—235; etc. We look forward with keen anticipation to succeeding editions of this valuable work, in the hope that it may become the standard one-volume history of our Synod.

W. G. POLACK

**The Christian Heritage in America.** By George Hedley. The Macmillan Company, New York. 177 pages, 7½×5½. \$2.00.

The writer of this book, born in Tientsin, China, and educated in England and America, is now Associate Professor of Economics and Sociology at Mills College, near Oakland, Calif. Asked to deliver a series of devotional addresses on the Christian Church and its ramifications into various denominations, he vividly depicted to the student body of Mills College the development of the Church from its inception in the Old Testament ("the Jewish Church") to Eastern Orthodoxy, Romanism, Lutheranism, Presbyterianism, Episcopalianism, Congregationalism, Methodism, and so forth, analyzing, frequently with excellent insight, each branch according to its doctrinal and historical background. The fifteen lectures (chapters) show that the author has well studied the history of the denominations which he describes, and his emphasis on the salient features of each is often very striking. His approach, however, is not critical, but rather appreciative. He stresses differences in order to point out the contributions which each group has made. No emphasis is placed at any time on the Christian's duty of adhering to and confessing the divine truth, for this is at variance with the author's unionistic point of view. In his estimation all denominations are valuable, since all have made important contributions to the corporate body of the Church. Lutherans cannot accept the writer's unionistic guidelines, but will, nevertheless, find the book worthy of careful study, since it shows them how others regard the problem of church division in its relation to the status of the Church as a whole. There are numerous historical errors



in the book. Lutherans, no doubt, will notice them, especially as they read what the writer has to say on Luther and his work. In view of the ecumenical trend in the Church of today the book is of importance inasmuch as it motivates a practical philosophy of ecumenicity.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Mariology.** By Rev. M. J. Scheeben. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo. Two volumes, 252 and 287 pages, 8½×6. Vol. I, \$2.50; Vol. II, \$3.50.

In view of the prevailing Mariolatry in the Roman Catholic Church, which to Protestants in general is both an enigma and an offense, especially as it is carried on in Catholic areas where there is no Protestant criticism to check its excrescences, it was perhaps very wise on the part of the Herder Book Company, in behalf of the Catholic doctrine of *hyperdulia*, to publish in two separate volumes what M. J. Scheeben, about seventy years ago, wrote about "Mariology" as a part of his *Dogmatic Theology*, which, however, he never completed. "Mariology," in its dogmatical sense, is the doctrine of the person, work, and veneration of Mary, the Mother of Christ according to His human nature. In his monograph on "Mariology" Scheeben seeks to supply the doctrinal basis and justification of the titles of honor ascribed to Mary and of the *hyperdulia* accorded to her in the Catholic Church. While some Catholic theologians have regarded as the main principle of Mariology the fact that she is *Theotokos* (the Mother of God) and others have considered as the supreme principle of Mariology the divine motherhood as it was historically realized, by which Mary became the "new Eve," the mother of the spiritually living, Scheeben unites these two principles into one and speaks of her "bridal motherhood of God," or of her "maternal state as bride of God" (p. XXXI). Mary's "bridal motherhood of God" means practically that she, as the Mother of God, is also the "bridal helper of Christ," so that in Christ's entire redemptive work, as also in His glorification, she takes a most necessary and important part. "Mary, full of grace," is therefore free from original sin, can boast an immaculate conception, is immune from all sin, and exempt from the bonds of death. Mary, moreover, is for this very reason also the Mediatrix between the holy God and sinful man and as such develops a supernatural activity in the entire divine operation of redemption, in which her Son is engaged, sharing with Him in all the glory which He has received as the world's Redeemer (though, of course, not in His glory as Son of God), she being at all times the dynamic and authoritative organ of the Holy Ghost (Vol. II, p. 186). The natural reaction of this *hyperdulia* (which in practice commonly becomes a real *latria*, i. e., a supreme worship, lawfully given to God only) on Protestants is fully realized by Scheeben's translator, Father T. L. M. J. Geukers, who in his Preface remarks: "Among Protestants it has become a proverb that the Catholic Church is no longer a Church of Christ, but a Church of Mary" (Vol. I, p. 111). While he deprecates this charge, this judgment may not be so very false after all. Just how the Catholic Church motivates and defends its Mariology is the ambitious program and thesis of Scheeben's two exhaustive volumes. In the first volume he discusses (1) the "concept and sources of Mariology" (Mary in the Old and the New Testament; Mary



in tradition; literature about Mary); (2) the Christological foundation of Mariology (her virginal conception, virginal motherhood, perpetual virginity, divine motherhood, bridal motherhood); and (3) the basic principle of Mariology (the distinguishing mark of Mary's person; the source of Mary's dignity). To this he adds, by way of further explanation, four appendixes—on the *prot-evangelium*, the human procreation, the *actio unitiva* ascribed to the Holy Ghost, and the annunciation by the angel. After having thus prepared the way, Scheeben, in the second volume, discusses (1) the holy person of Mary ("Mary, full of grace," freedom from original sin, her immediate conception, her permanent immunity from sin, and her exemption from the bonds of death), and (2) her work proper as the Mediatrix (her supernatural activity resulting from the distinguishing mark of her person or from the grace of her motherhood, her co-operation in general in the work of redemption, her co-operation in its concrete form, and her permanent office as Mediatrix). Scheeben thus enters into every detail of Mariology and deals exhaustively with every phase of it. At the time when his dogmatical opus was composed, there was still much opposition to extremes in the veneration of Mary and other saints, and so Scheeben himself speaks very guardedly and moderately. But very definitely he has laid (so far as Catholics are concerned) the foundation of Mariology and has supplied the substratum for other and more extravagant Mariologists to build upon. His work has been recognized as authoritative in the Catholic Church, and in 1935 Pope Pius XI very warmly recommended the study of his rather ponderous theological works. Protestant scholars may therefore approach his "Mariology" as a work which comes with full papal sanction. But to Protestant scholars adhering to the principle of the *sola Scriptura*, Scheeben's work offers no convincing proof at all. For his thesis he cannot supply any substantial Scripture proof, and his reasoning — and upon this he bases his thesis for the greatest part — appears as altogether nugatory. But no Protestant scholar dare ignore Scheeben's exhaustive work, since it is an *opus magnum* written in defense of Mariology. Matthias Joseph Scheeben was born in 1835, spent several years of theological study at Rome, was made professor of Dogmatics at the Catholic Seminary of Cologne, became prominent as a voluminous writer of theological articles and books, but died already in 1888, at the early age of 53 years. His *Mariology* was translated into Flemish and from Flemish into English. The English translation, however, is idiomatic and very fluent, though the subject matter is naturally very difficult. The book, because of its intrinsic historical and dogmatical values, belongs into every theological seminary library.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Personalities in the Christmas Story.** By R. R. Belter. The Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa. 96 pages, 6½×4¼. \$1.00.

It was indeed a happy inspiration that led Pastor Belter to write this little book describing the men, the events, the message, and the doctrine of the Christmas story as told by the Evangelists, and this in so simple, pious, and appealing a way that the little volume will no doubt be a most welcome gift in many homes, presenting to the readers both doctrinal and devotional values.

It tells of Zacharias, Elisabeth, John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, Caesar Augustus, Cyrenius, the innkeeper, the shepherds, Herod, the Wise Men, Simeon, Anna, Archelaus, and others. Here, too, the reader will find profitable instruction on the Triune God in His relation to our salvation as manifested at Christmas, the Virgin Birth, the angel's message "Unto you," and so forth. Now and then, perhaps, the reader will find a thought or sentence that might be questioned, but, on the whole, the little book is so very true and appealing that it can be cordially recommended as a plain but valuable popular contribution to our Lutheran Christmas literature.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**My Sermon Notes on Doctrinal Themes.** First Series. By the Rev. William P. Van Wyk. Baker Book House, 1019 Wealthy St. S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 183 pages, 7½×5. \$2.00.

As I opened this book and read the preface, I was pleased with three remarks: Ministers should not consider these notes "as an easy way out of the difficulty of sermonmaking"; it has been the author's aim in his own ministry to "present exegetical and expository sermons"; and, finally, the author's determination "to present messages that are drawn from and based upon the Word." As far as the last statement is concerned, the author did not succeed very well. He says, for instance: "Christ's sacrifice is sufficient to redeem the whole world. I do not say 'purposed' to redeem the whole world." (P. 43.) Again: "Universal atonement is not taught here" (p. 117). This is Calvinistic "theology." Scripture says, "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18). Who the "us" are the next verse tells us, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (v. 19.) Again the author of the *Sermon Notes* says that the human nature which the Son of God assumed was "not the unweakened human nature that Adam had before the Fall, nor as we shall have it after resurrection. It was our human nature as it has been weakened by sin" (p. 111). Scripture tells us that Christ's human nature was not that weakened by sin, but was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). In the same connection the author confuses the fact of Christ's incarnation with the mode of incarnation. He says that the very fact of Christ's incarnation was His humiliation. The author also denies Christ's descent into hell, saying that Christ's descent into hell was "the anguish and torments of hell in life" (p. 121), while Scripture, 1 Pet. 3:19, says that Christ after His quickening and before His resurrection descended into hell to show Himself the victor over sin, death, and the devil.

It is a pity that the otherwise good and usable book is marred by such errors.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**A Living Church at Work.** Danish Lutheran Publishing House, Blair, Nebr. 123 pages, 5½×8¼. 50 cts.

This little book, prepared by a committee on evangelization composed of three pastors and two laymen at the direction of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, is a delightful and effective piece of promotional literature. It reaches into every nook and corner of congregational life and work, having as its aim the instilling of greater spirituality in doing the work of the Lord.

No phase of congregational activity has, seemingly, been overlooked. We read the volume with interest and profit and believe that a general study of it by pastor and people will result in a greater participation and therefore also joy in church work. It might have been better to say (p. 40) that the Christian Church is built on Christ rather than on our faith in Christ. Likewise, since the book purports to be a true expression of the faith, life, and practice of that Church, we missed a clear-cut assertion of the Real Presence. The words of institution are indeed quoted as the basis of assurance, but the certainty of pardon flowing from the conviction that the body and blood of Christ are given us as a pledge in the Sacrament is not stated. Nor was any mention made in the chapter on organizations of that institution which among us is regarded as the chief contributor to future growth and stability, namely, the Christian day school. Aside from these things the book appears to be a most welcome addition to our practical-theology shelf, a comprehensive index to the work that needs to be done, and a means of stirring up greater interest in church work, all of which makes it desirable that it find its way also into the homes of the laity.

O. E. SOHN

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:*

**Walking with Jesus.** Rally Day Service. Prepared by Arthur L. Miller. 15 pages,  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ . Single copy, 7 cts., postpaid; dozen copies, 60 cts., plus postage; 100 copies, \$4.00, plus postage.

**Concordia Bible Teacher, "Elijah and Elisha."** By Rev. J. M. Weidenschilling, under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Vol. IX, October, 1947, No. 1. 75 cts per annum.

**Concordia Bible Student, "Elijah and Elisha."** Vol. XXXVII, October, 1947, No. 1. 50 cts per annum.

**In Christ, Our Lord,** Daily Devotions No. 78, Sept. 7 to Oct. 27, 1947, by Prof. Otto H. Theiss. Single copies 5 cents, postage extra; subscription for eight consecutive numbers, 55 cents; sixteen numbers, \$1.00. Bulk price: 48 cents per dozen, postage extra; \$3.50 per hundred, postage extra.

**Das Leben der Erzvaeter Abraham, Isaak und Jakob.** Andachten fuer die Zeit vom 7. Sept. bis zum 27. Okt. 1947, by Rev. R. Herrmann. Price same as above.

*From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:*

**The Message of Romans.** An Exposition. By Robert C. McQuilkin, D. D. 178 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . \$2.00.

*From Hart Publishing Company, New York:*

**A Treasury of Play Ideas for Tiny Tots.** By Caroline Horowitz. 93 pages,  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ . \$1.00.

*From Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich.:*

**Marian's Book of Bible Stories.** By Marian Schoolland. 343 pages,  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ . \$3.50.

**Things Unshakable and Other Sermons.** By Paul S. Rees, D. D.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . 153 pages. \$1.50.

**What of the Night?** By Wm. Edward Biederwolf, D. D.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . 94 pages. \$1.00.

**Marked Men.** By Wm. Ward Ayer, D. D.  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . 137 pages. \$2.00.

*From Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, N. Y.:*

**The Church in Our Town.** A Study of the Relationship between the Church and the Rural Community. By Rockwell C. Smith.  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$ . 190 pages. \$1.50.

**Preach the Word.** By Roy L. Smith.  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . 128 pages. \$1.00.

**This Love of Ours.** By Leslie R. Smith.  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . 100 pages. \$1.00.

**Cyclopedia of Bible Illustration.** Compiled by Paul E. Holdcraft. 326 pages,  $5\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ . \$3.00.

**How to Increase Church Income.** By Weldon Crossland. 159 pages  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . \$1.50.

*From Lutheran Publishing House, Blair, Nebr.:*

**Light at Midnight.** Edited by Chr. Justesen.  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9$ . 107 pages. \$1.25.

*From the Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa.:*

**Christian Liberty.** By Martin Luther,  $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . 44 pages. 30 cts.

